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POETICAL WORKS

OF

COLERIDGE AND KEATS

WITH A MEMOIR OF EACH

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FOUR VOLUMES IN TWO

VOL. II.



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THE PICCOLOMINI;

OR,

THE FIRST PART OF WALLENSTEIN.

A DRAMA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER



## PREFACE OF THE TRANSLATOR TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE two Dramas, PICCOLOMINI, or the first part of WALLLENSTEIN, and WALLLENSTEIN, are introduced in the original manuscript by a Prelude in one Act, entitled WALLLENSTEIN'S CAMP. This is written in rhyme, and in nine syllable verse, in the same *liling* metre (if that expression may be permitted) with the second Eclogue of Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar.

This Prelude possesses a sort of broad humour, and is not deficient in character; but to have translated it into prose, or into any other metre than that of the original, would have given a false notion both of its style and purport; to have translated it into the same metre would have been incompatible with a faithful adherence to the sense of the German, from the comparative poverty of our language in rhymes; and it would have been unadvisable from the incongruity of those lax verses with the present taste of the English Public. Schiller's intention seems to have been merely to have prepared his reader for the Tragedies by a lively picture of the laxity of discipline, and the mutinous dispositions of Wallenstein's soldiery. It is not necessary as a preliminary explanation. For these reasons it has been thought expedient not to translate it.

The admirers of Schiller, who have abstracted their conception of that author from the Robbers, and the Cabal and Love, plays in which the main interest is produced by the excitement of curiosity, and in which the curiosity is excited by terrible and extraordinary incident, will not have perused, without some portion of disappointment, the dramas which it has been my employment to translate. They should, however, reflect that these are historical dramas, taken from a popular German history; that we must therefore judge of

them in some measure with the feelings of Germans; or by analogy with the interest excited in us by similar dramas in our own language. Few, I trust, would be rash or ignorant enough to compare Schiller with Shakspeare; yet, merely as illustration, I would say that we should proceed to the perusal of Wallenstein, not from Lear or Othello, but from Richard the Second, or the three parts of Henry the Sixth. We scarcely expect rapidity in an historical drama; and many prolix speeches are pardoned from characters whose names and actions have formed the most amusing tales of our early life. On the other hand, there exist in these plays more individual beauties, more passages the excellence of which will bear reflection, than in the former productions of Schiller. The description of the astrological tower, and the reflections of the young lover which follow it, form in the original a fine poem; and my translation must have been wretched indeed, if it can have wholly overclouded the beauties of the scene in the first act of the first play between Questenberg, Max, and Octavio Piccolomini. If we except the scene of the setting sun in the Robbers, I know of no part in Schiller's Plays which equals the whole of the first scene of the fifth act of the concluding play. It would be unbecoming in me to be more diffuse on this subject. A translator stands connected with the original author by a certain law of subordination, which makes it more decorous to point out excellences than defects: indeed he is not likely to be a fair judge of either. The pleasure or disgust from his own labour will mingle with the feelings that arise from an afterview of the original. Even in the first perusal of a work in any foreign language which we understand, we are apt to attribute to it more excellence than it really possesses, from our own pleasurable sense of difficulty overcome without effort. Translation of poetry into poetry is difficult, because the translator must give a brilliancy to his language without that warmth of original conception from which such brilliancy would follow of its own accord. But the translator of a living author is encumbered with additional inconveniences. If he render his original faithfully, as to the sense of each passage, he must necessarily destroy a considerable portion of the

spirit; if he endeavour to give a work executed according to laws of compensation, he subjects himself to imputations of vanity, or misrepresentation. I have thought it my duty to remain bound by the sense of my original, with as few exceptions as the nature of the languages rendered possible.\*

---

It was my intention to have prefixed a Life of Wallenstein to this translation; but I found that it must either have occupied a space wholly disproportionate to the nature of the publication, or have been merely a meagre catalogue of events narrated not more fully than they already are in the Play itself. The recent translation, likewise, of Schiller's **HISTORY OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR**, diminished the motives thereto. In the translation I endeavoured to render my Author *literally* wherever I was not prevented by absolute differences of idiom; but I am conscious, that in two or three short passages I have been guilty of dilating the original; and from anxiety to give the full meaning, have weakened the force. In the metre I have availed myself of no other liberties than those which Schiller had permitted to himself, except the occasional breaking-up of the line by the substitution of a trochee for an iambus; of which liberty, so frequent in *our* tragedies, I find no instance in these dramas.†

---

\* Originally prefixed to the translation of the second part, but apparently as a general introduction.

† Originally prefixed to the translation of the first part.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

**WALLENSTEIN**, *Duke of Friedland, Generalissimo of the Imperial Forces in the Thirty Years' War.*

**OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI**, *Lieutenant-General.*

**MAX PICCOLOMINI**, *his Son, Colonel of a Regiment of Cavalry.*

**COUNT TERTSKY**, *the Commander of several Regiments, and Brother-in-Law of Wallenstein.*

**ILLO**, *Field-Marshal, Wallenstein's Conjurant.*

**ISOLANI**, *General of the Croats.*

**BUTLER**, *an Irishman, Commander of a Regiment of Dragoons.*

**TIEFFENBACH**,

**DON MARADAS**,

**GOETZ**,

**KOLALTO**,

} *Generals under Wallenstein.*

**NEUMANN**, *Captain of Cavalry, Aide-de-Camp to Tertsky.*

*The War Commissioner, VON QUESTENBERG*, *Imperial Envoy.*

**GENERAL WILANGEL**, *Swedish Envoy.*

**BAPTISTA SENI**, *Astrologer.*

**DUCHESS OF FRIEDLAND**, *Wife of Wallenstein.*

**THEKLA**, *her Daughter, Princess of Friedland.*

**THE COUNTESS TERTSKY**, *Sister of the Duchess.*

**A CORNET**

*Several COLONELS and GENERALS.*

*PAGES and ATTENDANTS, belonging to Wallenstein.*

*ATTENDANTS and HORBOISTS belonging to Tertsky.*

**THE MASTER OF THE CELLAR** *to Count Tertsky.*

**VALET DE CHAMBRE** *of Count Piccolomini.*



# THE PICCOLOMINI.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An old Gothic Chamber in the Council-house at Pilsen, decorated with colours and other war insignia.*

ILLO with BUTLER and ISOLANI.

ILLO. YE have come late—but ye are come!

The distance,

Count Isolani, excuses your delay.

ISO. Add this too, that we come not empty handed.

At Donauwert \* it was reported to us,

A Swedish caravan was on its way

Transporting a rich cargo of provision,

Almost six hundred waggons. This my Croats

Plunged down upon and seized, this weighty prize!——

We bring it hither——

ILLO.

Just in time to banquet

The illustrious company assembled here.

BUT. 'Tis all alive! a stirring scene here!

ISO.

Ay!

The very churches are all full of soldiers.

\* A town about twelve German miles northeast of Ulm

And in the Council-house, too, I observe,

[*Casts his eye round.*]

You're settled, quite at home ! Well, well ! we  
soldiers

Must shift and suit us in what way we can.

*Illo.* We have the Colonels here of thirty regiments.

You'll find Count Tertsky here, and Tiefenbach,

Kolalto, Goetz, Maradas, Hinnersam,

The Piccolomini, both son and father——

You'll meet with many an unexpected greeting  
From many an old friend and acquaintance. Only  
Gallas is wanting still, and Altringer.

*But.* Expect not Gallas.

*Illo.* [*hesitating.*] How so? Do you know——

*Iso.* [*interrupting him.*] Max Piccolomini  
here?—O bring me to him.

I see him yet, ('tis now ten years ago,

We were engaged with Mansfeld hard by Dessau,)

I see the youth, in my mind's eye I see him,

Leap his black war-horse from the bridge adown,

And toward his father, then in extreme peril,

Beat up against the strong tide of the Elbe.

The down was scarce upon his chin ! I hear

He has made good the promise of his youth,

And the full hero now is finished in him.

*Illo.* You'll see him yet ere evening. He conducts

The Duchess Friedland hither, and the Princess  
From Kärnthen. We expect them here at noon

*But.* Both wife and daughter does the Duke  
call hither?

He crowds in visitants from all sides.

*Iso.*

*Hm!*

So much the better! I had framed my mind  
To hear of nought but warlike circumstance,  
Of marches, and attacks, and batteries:  
And lo! the Duke provides, that something too  
Of gentler sort, and lovely, should be present  
To feast our eyes.

*Illo.* [*who has been standing in the attitude of  
meditation, to BUTLER, whom he leads a little on  
one side.*] And how came you to know  
That the Count Gallas joins us not?

*But.*

*Because*

He importuned me to remain behind.

*Illo.* [*with warmth.*] And you?—You hold out  
firmly?

[*Grasping his hand with affection.*] Noble Butler!

*But.* After the obligation which the Duke  
Had laid so newly on me——

*Illo.*

*I had forgotten*

A pleasant duty—MAJOR GENERAL,

I wish you joy!

*Iso.*

What, you mean, of his regiment?

I hear, too, that to make the gift still sweeter,

The Duke has given him the very same

In which he first saw service, and since then,

Worked himself, step by step, through each pre-  
ferment,

From the ranks upwards. And verily, it gives  
A precedent of hope, a spur of action  
To the whole corps, if once in their remembrance  
An old deserving soldier makes his way.

*But.* I am perplexed and doubtful, whether  
OF NO

I dare accept this your congratulation.

The Emperor has not yet confirmed the appoint-  
ment.

*Iso.* Seize it, friend! Seize it! The hand which  
in that post

Placed you, is strong enough to keep you there,  
Spite of the Emperor and his Ministers.

*Illo.* Ay, if we would but so consider it!—

If we would *all* of us consider it so!

The Emperor gives us nothing; from the Duke  
Comes all—whate'er we hope, whate'er we have.

*Iso.* [*to ILLO.*] My noble brother! did I tell you  
how

The Duke will satisfy my creditors?

Will be himself my banker for the future,

Make me once more a creditable man!—

And this is now the third time, think of that!

This kingly-minded man has rescued me

From absolute ruin, and restored my honour.

*Illo.* O that his power but kept pace with his  
wishes!

Why, friend! he'd give the whole world to his  
soldiers.

But at Vienna, brother!—here's the grievance!—

What politic schemes do they not lay to shorten  
His arm, and, where they can, to clip his pinions.  
Then these new dainty requisitions! these,  
Which this same Questenberg brings hither!—

*But.*

*Ay,*

These requisitions of the Emperor,—  
I too have heard about them; but I hope  
The Duke will not draw back a single inch!

*Illo.* Not from his right most surely, unless first  
— From office!

*But.* [*shocked and confused.*] Know you *ought*  
then? You alarm me.

*Iso.* [*at the same time with BUTLER, and in a  
hurried voice.*] We should be ruined, every one  
of us!

*Illo.* No more!

Yonder I see *our worthy friend* \* approaching  
With the Lieutenant-General, Piccolomini.

*But.* [*shaking his head significantly.*] I fear we  
shall not go hence as we came.

SCENE II.—*Enter OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI and QUESTEN-  
BERG.*

*Oct.* [*still in the distance.*] Ay, ay! more still!  
Still more new visitors!

Acknowledge, friend! that never was a camp,  
Which held at once so many heads of heroes.

[*Approaching nearer*

Welcome, Count Isolani!

\* Spoken with a sneer.

*Is.* My noble brother,  
Even now am I arrived; it had been else my  
duty—

*Oct.* And Colonel Butler—trust me I re-  
joice

Thus to renew acquaintance with a man  
Whose worth and services I know and honour.

See, see, my friend!

There might we place at once before our eyes  
The sum of war's whole trade and mystery—

[*To QUESTENBERG, presenting BUTLER and ISOLANI at  
the same time to him.*]

These two the total sum—STRENGTH and DIS-  
PATCH.

*Ques.* [*to OCTAVIO.*] And lo! betwixt them  
both experienced PRUDENCE!

*Oct.* [*presenting QUESTENBERG to BUTLER  
and ISOLANI.*] The Chamberlain and War-com-  
missioner Questenberg,

The bearer of the Emperor's behests,  
The long-tried friend and patron of all soldiers,  
We honour in this noble visitor.

[*Universal silence.*]

*Illo.* [*moving towards QUESTENBERG.*] 'Tis  
not the first time, noble Minister,  
You have shown our camp this honour.

*Ques.* Once before  
I stood before these colours.

*Illo.* Perchance, too, you remember *where* that

was.

It was at Znaim \* in Moravia, where  
You did present yourself on the part  
Of the Emperor, to supplicate our Duke  
That he would straight assume the chief command

*Ques.* To *supplicate*? Nay, noble General!  
So far extended neither my commission  
(At least to my own knowledge) nor my zeal.

*Illo.* Well, well, then—to *compel* him, if you  
choose.

I can remember me right well, Count Tilly  
Had suffered total rout upon the Lech.  
Bavaria lay all open to the enemy,  
Whom there was nothing to delay from pressing  
Onwards into the very heart of Austria.  
At that time you and Werdenberg appeared  
Before our General, storming him with prayers,  
And menacing the Emperor's displeasure,  
Unless he took compassion on this wretchedness.

*Iso.* [*steps up to them.*] Yes, yes, 'tis compre-  
hensible enough,

Wherefore, with your commission of to-day,  
You were not all too willing to remember  
Your former one.

*Ques.* Why not, Count Isolan?  
No contradiction sure exists between them.  
It was the urgent business of that time  
To snatch Bavaria from her enemy's hand;

\* A town not far from the Mine-mountains, on the high road from Vienna to Prague.

And my commission of to-day instructs me  
To free her from her good friends and protectors.

*Illo.* A worthy office! After with our blood  
We have wrested this Bohemia from the Saxon,  
To be swept out of it is all our thanks,  
The sole reward of all our hard-won victories.

*Ques.* Unless that wretched land be doomed to  
suffer

Only a change of evils, it must be  
Freed from the scourge alike of friend and foe.

*Illo.* What? 'twas a favourable year; the boors  
Can answer fresh demands already.

*Ques.* *Nay,*

If you discourse of herds and meadow-grounds—

*Iso.* The war maintains the war. Are the  
boors ruined,

The Emperor gains so many more new soldiers.

*Ques.* And is the poorer by even so many sub-  
jects.

*Iso.* Poh! we are all his subjects. [one fill

*Ques.* Yet with a difference, General! The  
With profitable industry the purse,  
The others are well skilled to empty it.  
The sword has made the Emperor poor: the plow  
Must re-invigorate his resources.

*Iso.* Sure!

Times are not yet so bad. Methinks I see

[Examining with his eye the dress and ornaments of  
QUESTENBERG.

Good store of gold that still remains uncoined.



*Ques.* Thank Heaven! that means have been  
found out to hide

Some little from the fingers of the Croats.

*Illo.* There! the Slawata and the Martinitz,  
On whom the Emperor heaps his gifts and graces,  
To the heart-burning of all good Bohemians—  
Those minions of court favour, those court harpies,  
Who fatten on the wrecks of citizens  
Driven from their house and home—who reap no  
harvests

Save in the general calamity—

Who now, with kingly pomp, insult and mock  
The desolation of their country—*these*,

*Let these, and such as these, support the war,*  
The fatal war, which they alone enkindled!

*But.* And those state-parasites, who have their  
feet

So constantly beneath the Emperor's table,  
Who cannot let a benefice fall, but they  
Snap at it with dog's hunger—they, forsooth,  
Would pare the soldier's bread, and cross his  
reckoning!

*Iso.* My life long will it anger me to think,  
How when I went to court seven years ago,  
To see about new horses for our regiment,  
How from one antechamber to another  
They dragged me on, and left me by the hour  
To kick my heels among a crowd of simpering  
Feast-fattened slaves, as if I had come thither  
A mendicant suitor for the crumbs of favour

That fall beneath their tables. And, at last,  
 Whom should they send me but a Capuchin !  
 Straight I began to muster up my sins  
 For absolution—but no such luck for *me* !  
*This* was the man, this Capuchin, with whom  
 I was to treat concerning the army horses :  
 And I was forced at last to quit the field,  
 'The business unaccomplished. Afterwards  
 The Duke procured me in three days, what I  
 Could not obtain in thirty at Vienna.

*Ques.* Yes, yes ! your travelling bills soon  
 found their way to us :

Too well I know we have still accounts to settle.

*Illo.* War is a violent trade : one cannot always  
 Finish one's work by soft means : every trifle  
 Must not be blackened into sacrilege.  
 If we should wait till you, in solemn council,  
 With due deliberation had selected  
 The smallest out of four-and twenty evils,  
 I'faith we should wait long.—

"Dash ! and through with it !" —That's the better  
 watch-word. [nature

Then after, come what may come. 'Tis man's  
 To make the best of a bad thing once past.  
 A bitter and perplexed "what shall I do ?"  
 Is worse to man than worst necessity.

*Ques.* Ay, doubtless, it is true : the Duke *does*  
 spare us

The troublesome task of choosing.

*But.*

Yes, the Duke

Cares with a father's feelings for his troops ;  
But how the Emperor feels for us, we see.

*Ques.* His cares and feelings all ranks share  
alike,

Nor will he offer one up to another.

*Iso.* And therefore thrusts he us into the de-  
serts

As beasts of prey, that so he may preserve  
His dear sheep fattening in his fields at home.

*Ques.* [*with a sneer.*] Count, this comparison  
you make, not I.

*But.* Why, were we all the Court supposes us,  
'Twere dangerous, sure, to give us liberty.

*Ques.* You have taken liberty—it was not given  
you.

And therefore it becomes an urgent duty  
To rein it in with curbs.

*Oct.* [*interposing and addressing QUESTEN-  
BERG.*] My noble friend,

This is no more than a remembrancing  
That you are now in camp, and among warriors.  
The soldier's boldness constitutes his freedom.  
Could he *act* daringly, unless he dared  
Talk even so? One runs into the other.  
The boldness of this worthy officer,

[*Pointing to BUTLER*

Which now has but mistaken in its mark,  
Preserved, when nought but boldness could pre-  
serve it,

To the Emperor his capital city, Prague,

In a most formidable mutiny  
Of the whole garrison. [*Military music at a distance.*  
Hah! here they come!

*Illo.* The sentries are saluting them: this signal  
Announces the arrival of the Duchess.

*Oct.* [*to QUESTENBERG.*] Then my son Max  
too has returned. 'Twas he  
Fetched and attended them from Kärnthen hither.

*Iso.* [*to ILLO.*] Shall we not go in company to  
greet them?

*Illo.* Well, let us go. — Ho! Colonel Butler,  
come. [*To OCTAVIO.*

You will not forget, that yet ere noon we meet  
The noble Envoy at the General's palace.

[*Exeunt all but QUESTENBERG and OCTAVIO.*

SCENE III.—QUESTENBERG and OCTAVIO.

*Ques.* [*with signs of aversion and astonishment.*]  
What have I not been forced to hear, Octavio!  
What sentiments! what fierce, uncurbed defiance!  
And were this spirit universal—

*Oct.* Him!

You are now acquainted with three fourths of the  
army.

*Ques.* Where must we seek then for a second  
host

To have the custody of this? That *Illo*  
Thinks worse, I fear me, than he speaks. And then  
This Butler, too,—he cannot even conceal  
The passionate workings of his ill intentions.

*Oct.* Quickness of temper—irritated pride ;  
 'Twas nothing more. I cannot give up Butler.  
 I know a spell that will soon dispossess  
 The evil spirit in *him*.

*Ques.* [*walking up and down in evident dis-*  
*quiet.*] Friend, friend!

O! this is worse, far worse, than we had suffered  
Ourselves to dream of at Vienna. There  
We saw it only with a courtier's eyes,  
Eyes dazzled by the splendour of the throne.  
We had not seen the war-chief, the commander,  
The man all-powerful in his camp. Here, here,  
'Tis quite another thing.

Here is no Emperor more—the Duke is Emperor  
Alas, my friend ! alas, my noble friend !  
This walk which you have ta'en me through the  
camp  
Strikes my hopes prostrate.

*Oct.* Now you see yourself  
Of what a perilous kind the office is,  
Which you deliver to me from the Court.  
The least suspicion of the General  
Costs me my freedom and my life, and would  
But hasten his most desperate enterprise.

**Ques.** Where was our reason sleeping when we trusted

This madman with the sword, and placed such  
power  
In such a hand? I tell you he'll refuse,  
Flatly refuse, to obey the Imperial orders.

Friend, he *can* do't, and what he can, he *will*.

And then the impunity of his defiance—

O! what a proclamation of our weakness!

*Oct.* D'ye think, too, he has brought his wife  
and daughter

Without a purpose hither? Here in camp!

And at the very point of time, in which

We're arming for the war? That he has taken

These, the last pledges of his loyalty,

Away from out the Emperor's domains—

This is no doubtful token of the nearness

Of some eruption!

*Ques.*

How shall we hold footing

Beneath this tempest, which collects itself

And threatens us from all quarters? The enemy

Of the empire on our borders, now already

The master of the Danube, and still farther,

And farther still, extending every hour!

In our interior the alarm-bells

Of insurrection—peasantry in arms——

All orders discontented—and the army,

Just in the moment of our expectation

Of aidance from it—lo! this very army

Seduced, run wild, lost to all discipline.

Loosened, and rent asunder from the state

And from their sov'reign, the blind instrument

Of the most daring of mankind, a weapon

Of fearful power, which at his will *he* wields!

*Oct.* Nay, nay, friend! let us not despair too  
soon,

Men's words are ever bolder than their deeds:  
 And many a resolute, who now appears  
 Made up to all extremes, will, on a sudden,  
 Find in his breast a heart he knew not of,  
 Let but a single honest man speak out  
 The true name of his crime! Remember, too,  
 We stand not yet so wholly unprotected.  
 Counts Altringer and Gallas have maintained  
 Their little army faithful to its duty,  
 And daily it becomes more numerous.  
 Nor can he take us by surprise: you know,  
 I hold him all encompassed by my listeners.  
 Whate'er he does, is mine, even while 'tis doing—  
 No step so small, but instantly I hear it.  
 Yea, his own mouth discloses it.

*Ques.*

'Tis quite

Incomprehensible, that he detects not  
 The foe so near!

*Oct.*

Beware, you do not think,  
 That I by lying arts, and complaisant  
 Hypocrisy, have skulk'd into his graces;  
 Or with the sustenance of smooth professions  
 Nourish his all-confiding friendship! No—  
 Compelled alike by prudence, and that duty  
 Which we all owe our country, and our sovereign  
 To hide my *genuine* feelings from him, yet  
 Ne'er have I duped him with base counterfeits!

*Ques.* It is the visible ordinance of heaven.

*Oct.* I know not what it is that so attracts  
 And links him both to me and to my son.

Comrades and friends we always were—long habit  
 Adventurous deeds performed in company,  
 And all those many and various incidents  
 Which store a soldier's memory with affections,  
 Had bound us long and early to each other—  
 Yet I can name the day, when all at once  
 His heart *rose* on me, and his confidence  
 Shot out in sudden growth. It was the morning  
 Before the memorable fight at Lützen.  
 Urged by an ugly dream, I sought him out,  
 To press him to accept another charger.  
 At distance from the tents, beneath a tree,  
 I found him in a sleep. When I had waked him,  
 And had related all my bodings to him,  
 Long time he stared upon me, like a man  
 Astounded; thereon fell upon my neck,  
 And manifested to me an emotion  
 That far outstripped the worth of that small service.  
 Since then his confidence has followed me  
 With the same pace that mine has fled from him.

*Ques.* You lead your son into the secret?

*Oct.* No!

*Ques.* What? and not warn him either what  
 bad hands

His lot has placed him in?

*Oct.* I must perforce

Leave him in wardship to his innocence.

His young and open soul—*dissimulation*

Is foreign to its habits! Ignorance

Alone can keep alive the cheerful air,



The unembarrassed sense and light free spirit,  
That make the Duke secure.

*Ques.* [*anxiously.*] My honoured friend! most  
highly do I deem  
Of Colonel Piccolomini—yet—if——  
Reflect a little——

*Oct.* I must venture it.  
Hush!—There he comes!

SCENE IV.—MAX PICCOLOMINI, OCTAVIO PICCOLO-  
MINI, QUESTENBERG.

*Max.* Ha! there he is himself. Welcome, my  
father!

[*He embraces his father. As he turns round he observes*  
QUESTENBERG, and draws back with a cold and  
reserved air.

You are engaged, I see. I'll not disturb you.

*Oct.* How Max? Look closer at this visitor;  
Attention, Max, an old friend merits—Reverence  
Belongs of right to the envoy of your sov'reign.

*Max.* [*drily.*] Von Questenberg!—Welcome—  
if you bring with you  
Aught good to our head-quarters.

*Ques.* [*seizing his hand.*] Nay, draw not  
Your hand away, Count Piccolomini!  
Not on mine own account alone I seized it,  
And nothing common will I say therewith.

[*Taking the hands of both.*

Octavio—Max Piccolomini!

O saviour names, and full of happy omen!

Ne'er will her prosperous genius turn from Austria,  
While two such stars, with blessed influences  
Beaming protection, shine above her hosts.

*Max.* Hey!—Noble minister! You miss your  
part.

You came not here to act a panegyric.  
You're sent, I know, to find fault and to scold us—  
I must not be beforehand with my comrades.

*Oct.* [*to MAX.*] He comes from court, where  
people are not quite

So well contented with the Duke, as here.

*Max.* What now have they contrived to find out  
in him?

That he alone determines for himself

What he himself alone doth understand?

Well, therein he does right, and will persist in't.

Heaven never meant him for that passive thing

That can be struck and hammered out to suit

Another's taste and fancy. He'll not dance

To every tune of every minister.

It goes against his nature—he can't do it.

He is possessed by a commanding spirit,

And his too is the station of command.

And well for us it is so! There exist

Few fit to rule themselves, but few that use

Their intellects intelligently.—Then

Well for the whole, if there be found a man,

Who makes himself what nature destined him,

The pause, the central point to thousand thous-  
ands—

Stands fixed and stately, like a firm-built column,  
Where all may press with joy and confidence.  
Now such a man is Wallenstein; and if  
Another better suits the Court—no other  
But such a one as he can serve the army.

*Qués.* The army? Doubtless!

*Oct.* [*aside to QUESTENBERG.*] Hush! suppress  
it, friend!

Unless *some* end were answered by the utterance.—  
Of *him* there you'll make nothing.

*Mix.* In their distress  
They call a spirit up, and when he comes,  
Straight their flesh creeps and quivers, and they  
dread him

More than the ills for which they called him up.  
The uncommon, the sublime, must seem and be  
Like things of every day.—But in the field,  
Ay, *there* the *Present Being* makes itself felt.  
The personal must command, the actual eye  
Examine. If to be the chieftain asks  
All that is great in nature, let it be  
Likewise his privilege to move and act  
In all the correspondences of greatness.  
The oracle within him, that which *lives*,  
He must invoke and question—not dead books,  
Not ordinances, not mould-rotted papers.

*Oct.* My son! of those old narrow ordinances  
Let us not hold too lightly. They are weights  
Of priceless value, which oppressed mankind  
Tied to the volatile will of their oppressors.

For always formidable was the league  
 And partnership of free power with free will.  
 The way of ancient ordinance, though it winds,  
 Is yet no devious way. Straight forward goes  
 The lightning's path, and straight the fearful path  
 Of the cannon-ball. Direct it flies and rapid,  
 Shattering that it *may* reach, and shattering what  
   it reaches.

My son ! the road, the human being travels,  
 That, on which BLESSING comes and goes, doth  
   follow

The river's course, the valley's playful windings,  
 Curves round the corn-field and the hill of vines,  
 Honouring the holy bounds of property !  
 And thus secure, though late, leads to its end.

*Quas.* O hear your father, noble youth ! hear  
   him

Who is at once the hero and the man.

*Oct.* My son, the nursling of the camp spoke in  
   thee !

### A war of fifteen years

Hath been thy education and thy school.  
 Peace hast thou never witnessed ! There exists  
 A higher than the warrior's excellence.  
 In war itself war is no ultimate purpose.  
 The vast and sudden deeds of violence,  
 Adventures wild, and wonders of the moment,  
 These are not they, my son, that generate  
 The Calm, the Blissful, and the enduring Mighty  
 Lo there ! the soldier, rapid architect !

Builds his light town of canvas, and at once  
The whole scene moves and bustles momentarily,  
With arms and neighing steeds, and mirth and  
quarrel.

The motley market fills ; the roads, the streams  
Are crowded with new freights, trade stirs and  
hurries !

But on some morrow morn, all suddenly,  
The tents drop down, the horde renews its march.  
Dreary, and solitary as a church-yard  
The meadow and down-trodden seed-plot lie,  
And the year's harvest is gone utterly.

*Max.* O let the Emperor make peace, my father !  
Most gladly would I give the blood-stained laurel  
For the first violet of the leafless spring,  
Plucked in those quiet fields where I have jour-  
neyed !

*Oct.* What ails thee ? What so moves thee all  
at once ?

*Max.* Peace have I ne'er beheld ? I *have* be-  
held it.

From thence am I come hither : O ! that sight,  
It glimmers still before me, like some landscape  
Left in the distance,—some delicious landscape !  
My road conducted me through countries where  
The war has not yet reached. Life, life, my  
father—

My venerable father, life has charms  
Which we have ne'er experienced. We have  
been

But voyaging along its barren coasts,  
 Like some poor ever-roaming horde of pirates,  
 That, crowded in the rank and narrow ship,  
 House on the wild sea with wild usages,  
 Nor know aught of the main land but the bays  
 Where safest they may venture a thieves' land-

ing.

Whate'er in the inland dales the land conceals  
 Of fair and exquisite, O! nothing, nothing,  
 Do we behold of that in our rude voyage.

*Oct.* [*attentive with an appearance of uneasiness.*] And so your journey has revealed this to you?

*Max.* "I was the first leisure of my life. O tell me,

What is the meed and purpose of the toil,  
 The painful toil, which robbed me of my youth,  
 Left me a heart unsouled and solitary,  
 A spirit uninformed, unornamented.  
 For the camp's stir and crowd and ceaseless larum,  
 The neighing war-horse, the air-shattering trumpet,  
 The unvaried, still returning hour of duty,  
 Word of command, and exercise of arms—  
 There's nothing here, there's nothing in all this  
 To satisfy the heart, the gasping heart!  
 Mere bustling nothingness, where the soul is not—  
 This cannot be the sole felicity,  
 These cannot be man's best and only pleasures.

*Oct.* Much hast thou learnt, my son, in this  
 short journey.

*Max.* O! day thrice lovely! when at length  
the soldier

Returns home into life; when he becomes  
A fellow-man among his fellow-men.

The colours are unfurled, the cavalcade

Marshals, and now the buzz is hushed, and  
hark!

Now the soft peace-march beats, home, brothers,  
home!

The caps and helmets are all garlanded

With green boughs, the last plundering of the  
fields.

The city gates fly open of themselves,

They need no longer the petard to tear them.

The ramparts are all filled with men and women,

With peaceful men and women, that send on-  
wards

Kisses and welcomings upon the air,

Which they make breezy with affectionate ges-  
tures.

From all the towers rings out the merry peal,

The joyous vespers of a bloody day.

O happy man, O fortunate! for whom

The well-known door, the faithful arms are  
open,

The faithful tender arms with mute embracing.

*Ques.* [*apparently much affected.*] O! that you  
should speak

Of such a distant, distant time, and not

Of the to-morrow, not of this to-day.

*Max.* [turning round to him quick and vehement.] Where lies the fault but on you in Vienna?

I will deal openly with you, Questenberg.  
 Just now, as first I saw you standing here,  
 (I'll own it to you freely,) indignation  
 Crowded and pressed my inmost soul together.  
 'Tis ye that hinder peace, *ye*!—and the warrior,  
 It is the warrior that must force it from you.  
 Ye fret the General's life out, blacken him,  
 Hold him up as a rebel, and Heaven knows  
 What else still worse, because he spares the  
                   Saxons,  
 And tries to awaken confidence in the enemy;  
 Which yet's the only way to peace: for if  
 War intermit not during war, *how* then  
 And *whence* can peace come?—Your own  
                   plagues fall on you!  
 Even as I love what's virtuous, hate I you.  
 And here make I this vow, here pledge myself;  
 My blood shall spurt out for this Wallenstein,  
 And my heart drain off, drop by drop, ere ye  
 Shall revel and dance jubilee o'er his ruin. [Exit

SCENE V.—QUESTENBERG, OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI

*Ques.* Alas, alas! and stands it so?

[Then in pressing and impatient tones

What, friend! and do we let him go away  
 In this delusion—let him go away?



Not call him back immediately, not open  
His eyes upon the spot?

*Oct.* [*recovering himself out of a deep study.*]

He has now opened mine,

And I see more than pleases me.

*Ques.*

What is it?

*Oct.* Curse on this journey!

*Ques.*

But why so? What is it?

*Oct.* Come, come along, friend! I must follow up  
The ominous track immediately. Mine eyes  
Are opened now, and I must use them. Come!

[*Draws QUESTENBERG on with him.*]

*Ques.* What now? Where go you then?

*Oct.*

To her herself.

*Ques.*

To——

*Oct.* [*interrupting him and correcting himself.*]

To the Duke. Come, let us go—'Tis done,  
'tis done,

I see the net that is thrown over him.

O! he returns not to me as he went.

*Ques.* Nay, but explain yourself.

*Oct.*

And that I should not  
Foresee it, not prevent this journey! Wherefore  
Did I keep it from him?—You were in the right.  
I should have warned him! Now it is too late.

*Ques.* But *what's* too late? Bethink yourself,  
my friend,

That you are talking absolute riddles to me.

*Oct.* [*more collected.*] Come!—to the Duke's.

'Tis close upon the hour

Which he appointed you for audience. Come!

A curse, a threefold curse, upon this journey!

[*He leads QUESTENBERG off.*]

SCENE VI.—*Changes to a spacious chamber in the house of the DUKE OF FRIEDLAND.—SERVANTS employed in putting the tables and chairs in order. During this enters SENI, like an old Italian doctor, in black, and clothed somewhat fantastically. He carries a white staff, with which he marks out the quarters of the heaven.*

1st Ser. Come—to it, lads, to it! Make an end of it. I hear the sentry call out, “Stand to your arms!” They will be there in a minute.

2d. Ser. Why were we not told before that the audience would be held here? Nothing prepared—  
no orders—no instructions—

3d. Ser. Ay, and why was the balcony-chamber countermanded, that with the great worked carpet?—there one can look about one.

1st. Ser. Nay, that you must ask the mathematician there. He says it is an unlucky chamber.

2d. Ser. Poh! stuff and nonsense! That’s what I call a *hum*. A chamber is a chamber; what much can the place signify in the affair?

Seni. [*with gravity.*] My son, there’s *nothing* insignificant,

*Nothing!* But yet in every earthly thing

First and most principal is place and time.

1st. Ser. [*to the second.*] Say nothing to him,  
Nat.

The Duke himself must let him have his own will

*Seni.* [*counts the chairs, half in a loud, half in a low voice, till he comes to eleven, which he repeats.*]

Eleven! an evil number! Set twelve chairs.

Twelve! twelve signs hath the zodiac: five and seven,

The holy numbers, include themselves in twelve.

*2d. Ser.* And what may you have to object against eleven? I should like to know that now.

*Seni.* Eleven is—transgression; eleven over-steps

The ten commandments.

*2d. Ser.* That's good! and why do you call five a holy number?

*Seni.* Five is the soul of man: for even as man is mingled up of good and evil, so the five is the first number that's made up Of even and odd.

*2d. Ser.* The foolish old coxcomb!

*1st. Ser.* Ey! let him alone though. I like to hear him; there is more in his words than can be seen at first sight.

*3d. Ser.* Off, they come.

*2d. Ser.* There! Out at the side-door.

[*They hurry off. SENI follows slowly. A Page brings the staff of command on a red cushion, and places it on the table near the DUKE's chair. They are announced from without, and the wings of the door fly open.*]

## SCENE VII.—WALLENSTEIN, DUCHESS.

*Wal.* You went then through Vienna, were  
presented  
To the Queen of Hungary?

*Duch.* Yes, and to the Empress too.  
And by both Majesties were we admitted  
To kiss the hand.

*Wal.* And how was it received,  
That I had sent for wife and daughter hither  
To the camp, in winter time?

*Duch.* I did even that  
Which you commissioned me to do. I told them,  
You had determined on our daughter's marriage,  
And wished, ere yet you went into the field,  
To show the elected husband his betrothed.

*Wal.* And did they guess the choice which I had  
made?

*Duch.* They only hoped and wished it may have  
fallen

Upon no foreign nor yet Lutheran noble.

*Wal.* And you—what do *you* wish, Elizabeth?

*Duch.* Your will, you know, was always mine.

*Wal.* [*after a pause.*] Well then,  
And in all else, of what kind and complexion  
Was your reception at the Court?

[*The DUCHESS casts her eyes on the ground and remains silent.*  
Hide nothing from me. How were you received?

*Duch.* O! my dear lord, all is not what it was.  
A cankerworm, my lord, a cankerworm  
Has stolen into the bud.

*Wal.*

*Ay!* is it so!

What, they were lax? they failed of the old respect?

*Duch.* Not of respect. No honours were omitted.

No outward courtesy; but in the place  
Of condescending, confidential kindness,  
Familiar and endearing, there were given me  
Only these honours and that solemn courtesy.  
Ah! and the tenderness which was put on,  
It was the guise of pity, not of favour.  
No! Albrecht's wife, Duke Albrecht's princely  
wife,

Count Harrach's noble daughter, should not *so*—  
Not wholly so should she have been received.

*Wal.* Yes, yes; they have ta'en offence. My  
latest conduct,

They railed at it, no doubt.

*Duch.*

O that they had!

I have been long accustomed to defend you,  
To heal and pacify distempered spirits.  
No; no one railed at you. They wrapped them  
up,

O Heaven! in such oppressive, solemn silence!—  
Here is no every-day misunderstanding,  
No transient pique, no cloud that passes over  
Something most luckless, most unhealable,  
Has taken place. The Queen of Hungary  
Used formerly to call me her dear aunt,  
And ever at departure to embrace me—

*Wal.* Now she omitted it?

*Duch.* [*wiping away her tears, after a pause.*]

She *did* embrace me,

But then first when I had already taken  
My formal leave, and when the door already  
Had closed upon me, then did she come out  
In haste, as she had suddenly bethought herself,  
And pressed me to her bosom, more with anguish  
Than tenderness.

*Wal.* [*seizes her hand soothingly.*] Nay, now  
collect yourself,

And what of Eggenberg and Lichtenstein,  
And of our other friends there?

*Duch.* [*shaking her head.*] I saw none.

*Wal.* Th' Ambassador from Spain, who once  
was wont

To plead so warmly for me?—

*Duch.* Silent, silent!

*Wal.* These suns then are eclipsed for us.

Henceforward

Must we roll on, our own fire, our own light.

*Duch.* And were it—were it, my dear lord, in  
that

Which moved about the Court in buzz and whisper,  
But in the country let itself be heard

Aloof—in that which Father Lamormain

In sundry hints and——

*Wal.* [*eagerly.*] Lamormain! what said *he*!

*Duch.* That you're accused of having daringly  
O'erstepped the powers intrusted to you, charged  
With traitorous contempt of th' Emperor

And his supreme behests. The proud Bavarian,  
He and the Spaniards stand up your accusers—  
That there's a storm collecting over you  
Of far more fearful menace than that former one  
Which whirled you headlong down at Regensburg.  
And people talk, said he, of—Ah!—

*[Stifling extreme emotion.]*

*Wal.* Proceed!

*Duch.* I cannot utter it!

*Wal.* Proceed!

*Duch.* They talk——

*Wal.* Well!

*Duch.* Of a second——

*[Catches her voice and hesitates.]*

*Wal.* Second——

*Duch.* More disgraceful

——Dismission!

*Wal.* Talk they?

*[Strides across the room in vehement agitation.]*

O! they force, they thrust me  
With violence, against my own will, onward!

*Duch.* *[presses near to him, in entreaty.]* O!  
if there yet be time, my husband! if

By giving way and by submission, this  
Can be averted—my dear lord, give way!  
Win down your proud heart to it! Tell that  
heart,

It is your sovereign lord, your Emperor  
Before whom you retreat. O! let no longer

Low tricking malice blacken your good meaning  
 With abhorred venomous glosses. Stand you up  
 Shielded and helmed and weaponed with the truth,  
 And drive before you into uttermost shame  
 These slanderous liars! Few firm friends have  
 we—

You know it!—the swift growth of our good fortune  
 It hath but set us up, a mark for hatred.  
 What are we, if the sovereign's grace and favour  
 Stand not before us?

SCENE VIII.—*Enter the COUNTESS TERTSKY, leading in her hand the PRINCESS THEKLA, richly adorned with brilliants. COUNTESS, THEKLA, WALLENSTEIN, DUCHESS.*

*Coun.* How, sister? What already upon business,

*[Observing the countenance of the DUCHESS.*

And business of no pleasing kind I see,  
 Ere he has gladdened at his child. The first  
 Moment belongs to joy. Here, Friedland! father!  
 This is thy daughter.

*THEKLA approaches with a shy and timid air, and bends herself as about to kiss his hand. He receives her in his arms, and remains standing for some time lost in the feeling of her presence.*

*Wal.* Yes! pure and lovely hath hope risen on me:

I take her as the pledge of greater fortune.



*Duch.* 'Twas but a little child when you departed

To raise up that great army for the Emperor :  
And after, at the close of the campaign,  
When you returned home out of Pomerania,  
Your daughter was already in the convent,  
Wherein she has remained till now.

*Wal.*

The while

We in the field here gave our cares and toils  
To make her great, and fight her a free way  
To the loftiest earthly good ; lo ! mother Nature  
Within the peaceful silent convent walls  
Has done her part, and out of her free grace  
Hath she bestowed on the beloved child  
The godlike ; and now leads her thus adorned  
To meet her splendid fortune, and my hope.

*Duch.* [to THEKLA.] Thou wouldst not have  
recognized thy father,

Wouldst thou, my child ? She counted scarce  
eight years,

When last she saw your face.

*Thek.*

O yes, yes, mother !

At the first glance !—My father is not altered.  
The form that stands before me, falsifies  
No feature of the image that hath lived  
So long within me !

*Wal.*

The voice of my child !

[Then after a pause.

I was indignant at my destiny  
That it denied me a man-child, to be

Heir of my name and of my prosperous fortune  
 And re-illumine my soon extinguished being,  
 In a proud line of princes.

I wronged my destiny. Here upon this head  
 So lovely in its maiden bloom will I  
 Let fall the garland of a life of war,  
 Nor deem it lost, if only I can wreath it  
 Transmitted to a regal ornament,  
 Around these beauteous brows.

*[He clasps her in his arms, as PICCOLOMINI enters.]*

SCENE IX.—*Enter MAX PICCOLOMINI and some time after*  
*COUNT TERTSKY, the others remaining as before.*

*Coun.* There comes the Paladin who protect-  
 ed us.

*Wal.* Max! Welcome, ever welcome! Always  
 wert thou

The morning star of my best joys!

*Max.* *My General—*

*Wal.* 'Till now it was the Emperor who reward-  
 ed thee,

I but the instrument. This day thou hast bound  
 The father to thee, Max! the fortunate father,  
 And this debt Friedland's self must pay.

*Max.* *My prince*

You made no common hurry to transfer it.  
 I come with shame: yea, not without a pang!  
 For scarce have I arrived here, scarce delivered  
 The mother and the daughter to your arms

But there is brought to me from your equerry  
 A splendid richly-plated hunting dress,  
 So to remunerate me for my troubles——  
 Yes, yes, remunerate me! Since a trouble  
 It must be, a mere office, not a favour  
 Which I leaped forward to receive, and which  
 I came already with full heart to thank you for.  
 No! 'twas not so intended, that my business  
 Should be my highest best good fortune!

[TERTSKY enters, and delivers letters to the DUKE, which  
 he breaks open hurriedly.]

Coun. [to MAX.] Remunerate your trouble!  
 For his joy

He makes you recompense. 'Tis not unfitting  
 For you, Count Piccolomini, to feel  
 So tenderly—my brother it beseems  
 To show himself for ever great and princely.

Thek. Then I too must have scruples of his love:  
 For his munificent hands did ornament me  
 Ere yet the father's heart had spoken to me.

Max. Yes; 'tis his nature ever to be giving,  
 And making happy.

[He grasps the hand of the DUCHESS with still increasing  
 warmth.]

How my heart pours out  
 Its all of thanks to him: O! how I seem  
 To utter all things in the dear name Friedland.  
 While I shall live, so long will I remain  
 The captive of this name: in it shall bloom

My every fortune, every lovely hope.  
Inextricably as in some magic ring  
In this name hath my destiny charm-bound me !

*Coun.* [*who during this time has been anxiously watching the DUKE, and remarks that he is lost in thought over the letters.*] My brother wishes us to leave him. Come.

*Wal.* [*turns himself round quick, collects himself, and speaks with cheerfulness to the DUCHESS.*]

Once more I bid thee welcome to the camp,  
Thou art the hostess of this court. You, Max,  
Will now again administer your old office,  
While we perform the sovereign's business here.

[MAX PICCOLOMINI offers the DUCHESS his arm, the COUNTESS accompanies the PRINCESS.]

*Ter.* [*calling after him.*] Max, we depend on seeing you at the meeting.

SCENE X.—WALLENSTEIN, COUNT TERTSKY.

*Wal.* [*in deep thought to himself.*] She hath  
seen all things as they are—It is so,  
And squares completely with my other notices.  
They have determined finally in Vienna,  
Have given me my successor already ;  
It is the King of Hungary, Ferdinand,  
The Emperor's delicate son ! he's now their  
saviour,

He's the new star that's rising now ! Of us  
They think themselves already fairly rid,  
And as we were deceased, the heir already



*Wal.*

So then, doubtless,

Yes, doubtless, this same modest Swede expects  
 That I shall yield him some fair German tract  
 For his prey and booty, that ourselves at last  
 On our own soil and native territory,  
 May be no longer our own lords and masters !  
 An excellent scheme ! No, no ! They must be off ;  
 Off, off ! away ! *we* want no such neighbours.

*Ter.* Nay, yield them up that dot, that speck of~~land~~—

It goes not from your portion. If you win  
 The game, what matters it to you who pays it ?

*Wal.* Off with them, off ! Thou understand'st  
 not this.

Never shall it be said of me, I parcelled  
 My native land away, dismembered Germany,  
 Betrayed it to a foreigner, in order  
 To come with stealthy tread, and filch away  
 My own share of the plunder—Never ! never !—  
 No foreign power shall strike root in the empire,  
 And least of all, these Goths, these hunger-wolves,  
 Who send such envious, hot and greedy glances  
 T'wards the rich blessings of our German lands !  
 I'll have their aid to cast and draw my nets,  
 But not a single fish of all the draught  
 Shall they come in for.

*Ter.*

You will deal, however,

More fairly with the Saxons ? They lose patience  
 While you shift ground and make so many curves.  
 Say, to what purpose all these masks ? Your friends

Are plunged in doubts, baffled and led astray in  
you.

There's Oxenstiern, there's Arnheim—neither  
knows

What he should think of your procrastinations.

And in the end I prove the liar ; all

Passes through me. I have not even your hand-  
writing.

*Wal.* I *never* give my hand-writing ; thou  
knowest it.

*Ter.* But how can it be *known* that you're in  
earnest,

If the act follows not upon the word ?

You must yourself acknowledge that in all

Your intercourses hitherto with the enemy

You might have done with safety all you have done,

Had you meant nothing further than to gull him

For the Emperor's service.

*Wal.* [*after a pause during which he looks nar-  
rowly on TERTSKY.*] And from whence dost thou  
know

That I'm *not* gulling him for the Emperor's service?

Whence knowest thou that I'm not gulling all of  
you ?

Dost thou know *me* so well ! When made I thee

The intendant of my secret purposes ?

I am not conscious that I ever opened

My inmost thoughts to thee. The Emperor, it is  
true,

Hath dealt with me amiss ; and if I *would*,

I could repay him with usurious interest  
For the evil he hath done me. It delights me  
To know my *power*; but whether I shall use it,  
Of that, I should have thought that thou couldst  
speak

No wiselier than thy fellows.

*Ter.* So hast thou always played thy game  
with us. [Enter ILLO.]

SCENE XI.—ILLO, WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY.

*Wal.* How stand affairs without? Are they  
prepared?

*Illo.* You'll find them in the very mood you  
wish.

They know about the Emperor's requisitions,  
And are tumultuous.

*Wal.* How hath Isolan

Declared himself?

*Illo.* He's yours, both soul and body,  
Since you built up again his faro-bank.

*Wal.* And which way doth Kolaito bend? Hast  
thou

Made sure of Tiefenbach and Deodati?

*Illo.* What Piccolomini does, that they do too.

*Wal.* You mean then I may venture somewhat  
with them?

*Illo.* —If you are assured of the Piccolomini.

*Wal.* Not more assured of mine own self.



*Ter.* And yet  
I would you trusted not so much to Octavio,  
The fox!

*Wal.* Thou teachest me to know my man?  
Sixteen campaigns I have made with that old  
warrior.

Besides, I have his horoscope,  
We both are born beneath like stars—in short  
[*With an air of mystery.*]

To this belongs its own particular aspect,  
If therefore thou canst warrant me the rest——

*Illo.* There is among them all but this one  
voice,

You *must* not lay down the command. I hear  
They mean to send a deputation to you.

*Wal.* If I'm in aught to bind myself to them,  
They too must bind themselves to me.

*Illo.* Of course.

*Wal.* Their words of honour they must give,  
their oaths,

Give them in writing to me, promising  
Devotion to my service *unconditional*.

*Illo.* Why not?

*Ter.* Devotion *unconditional*?  
The exception of their duties towards Austria  
They'll always place among the premises.  
With this reserve——

*Wal.* [*shaking his head.*] All *unconditional*!  
No premises, no reserves.

*Illo.* A thought has struck me.

Does not Count Tertsy give us a set banquet  
This evening?

*Ter.* Yes; and all the Generals  
Have been invited.

*Illo.* [*to Wallenstein.*] Say, will you here fully  
Commission me to use my own discretion?  
I'll gain for you the Generals' words of honour,  
Even as you wish.

*Wal.* Gain me their signatures!  
How you come by them, that is *your* concern.

*Illo.* And if I bring it to you, black on white,  
That all the leaders who are present here  
Give themselves up to you, without condition;  
Say, will you *then*—*then* will you show yourself  
In earnest, and with some decisive action  
Make trial of your luck?

*Wal.* The signatures!  
Gain me the signatures.

*Illo.* Seize, seize the hour  
Ere it slips from you. Seldom comes the moment  
In life, which is indeed sublime and weighty.  
To make a great decision possible,  
O! many things, all transient and all rapid,  
Must meet at once: and, haply, they thus met  
May by that confluence be enforced to pause  
Time long enough for wisdom, though too short,  
Far, far too short a time for doubt and scruple!  
This is that moment. See, our army chieftains,  
Our best, our noblest, are assembled around *you*,  
Their kinglike leader! On your nod they wait.

The single threads, which here your prosperous  
fortune

Hath woven together in one potent web  
Instinct with destiny, O let them not  
Unravel of themselves. If you permit  
These chiefs to separate, so unanimous  
Bring you them not a second time together.  
'Tis the high tide that heaves the stranded ship,  
And every individual's spirit waxes  
In the great stream of multitudes. Behold  
They are still here, here still! But soon the war  
Bursts them once more asunder, and in small  
Particular anxieties and interests  
Scatters their spirit, and the sympathy  
Of each man with the whole. He, who to-day  
Forgets himself, forced onward with the stream,  
Will become sober, seeing but himself,  
Feel only his own weakness, and with speed  
Will face about, and march on in the old  
High road of duty, the old broad-trodden road,  
And seek but to make shelter in good plight.

*Wall.* The time is not yet come.

*Ter.* So you say always.

But *when* will it be time?

*Wal.* When I shall say it.

*Illo.* You'll wait upon the stars, and on their  
hours,

Till the earthly hour escapes you. O, believe me,  
In your own bosom are your destiny's stars.  
Confidence in yourself, prompt resolution,

This is your VENUS ! and the sole malignant,  
The only one that harmeth you is DOUBT.

Wal. Thou speakest as thou understand'st.

How oft

And many a time I've told thee, Jupiter,  
That lustrous god, was setting at thy birth.  
Thy visual power subdues no mysteries ;  
Mole-eyed, thou may'st but burrow in the earth  
Blind as that subterrestrial, who with wan,  
Lead-coloured shine lighted thee into life.  
The common, the terrestrial, thou may'st see,  
With serviceable cunning knit together  
The nearest with the nearest ; and therein  
I trust thee and believe thee ! but whate'er  
Full of mysterious import Nature weaves,  
And fashions in the depths—the spirit's ladder,  
That from this gross and visible world of dust  
Even to the starry world, with thousand rounds,  
Builds itself up ; on which the unseen powers  
Move up and down on heavenly ministries—  
The circles in the circles, that approach  
The central sun with ever-narrowing orbit—  
These see the glance alone, the unsealed eye,  
Of Jupiter's glad children born in lustre.

*[He walks across the chamber, then returns, and, stam-  
pling still, proceeds.]*

The heavenly constellations make not merely  
The day and nights, summer and spring, not  
merely  
Signify to the husbandman the seasons

Of sowing and of harvest. Human action,  
 That is the seed too of contingencies,  
 Strewed on the dark land of futurity,  
 In hopes to reconcile the powers of fate.  
 Whence it behoves us to seek out the seed-time,  
 To watch the stars, select their proper hours,  
 And trace with searching eye the heavenly houses,  
 Whether the enemy of growth and thriving  
 Hide himself not, malignant, in his corner.  
 Therefore permit me my own time. Meanwhile  
 Do you your part. As yet I cannot say  
 What *I* shall do—only, give way I will not.  
 Depose me too they shall not. On these points  
 You may rely.

*Page [entering.]* My Lords, the Generals.

*Wal.* Let them come in.

SCENE XII.—WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY, ILLO.—*To them enter QUESTENBERG, OCTAVIO, and MAX PICCOLomini, BUTLER, ISOLANI, MARADAS, and three other Generals. WALLENSTEIN motions QUESTENBERG, who in consequence takes the chair directly opposite to him; the others follow, arranging themselves according to their rank. There reigns a momentary silence.*

*Wal.* I have understood, 'tis true, the sum and  
 import  
 Of your instructions, Questenberg; have weighed  
 them,  
 And formed my final, absolute resolve;  
 Yet it seems fitting, that the generals

Should hear the will of the Emperor from your  
mouth.

May't please you then to open your commission  
Before these noble chieftains.

*Ques.*

I am ready

To obey you ; but will first entreat your Highness,  
And all these noble chieftains, to consider,  
The imperial dignity and sovereign right  
Speaks from my mouth, and not my own pre-  
sumption.

*Wal.* We excuse all preface.

*Ques.*

When his Majesty

The Emperor to his courageous armies  
Presented in the person of Duke Friedland  
A most experienced and renowned commander,  
He did it in glad hope and confidence  
To give thereby to the fortune of the war  
A rapid and auspicious change. The onset  
Was favourable to his royal wishes.  
Bohemia was delivered from the Saxons,  
The Swede's career of conquest checked ! These  
lands  
Began to draw breath freely, as Duke Friedland  
From all the streams of Germany forced hither  
The scattered armies of the enemy,  
Hither invoked as round one magic circle  
The Rhinegrave, Bernhard, Banner, Oxenstiern,  
Yea, and that never-conquered King himself ;  
Here finally, before the eye of Nürnberg,  
The fearful game of battle to decide.

*Wal.* May't please you, to the point.

*Ques.* In Nürnberg's camp the Swedish monarch left

His fame—in Lützen's plains his life. But who  
 Stood not astounded, when victorious Friedland  
 After this day of triumph, this proud day,  
 Marched toward Bohemia with the speed of flight,  
 And vanished from the theatre of war ;  
 While the young Weimar hero forced his way  
 Into Franconia, to the Danube, like  
 Some delving winter-stream, which, where it  
     rushes,

Makes its own channel ; with such sudden speed  
 He marched, and now at once 'fore Regensburg  
 Stood to the affright of all good Catholic Christians.

Then did Bavaria's well-deserving Prince  
 Entreat swift aidance in his extreme need ;  
 The Emperor sends seven horsemen to Duke  
     Friedland,

Seven horsemen couriers sends he with the entreaty :

He superadds his own, and supplicates  
 Where as the sovereign lord he can command.  
 In vain his supplication ! At this moment  
 The Duke hears only his old hate and grudge,  
 Barter's the general good to gratify  
 Private revenge—and so falls Regensburg.

*Wal.* Max, to what period of the war alludes he ?  
 My recollection fails me here.

*Max.* He means  
When we were in Silesia.

*Wal.* Ay ! Is it so !  
But what had we to do *there* ?

*Max.* To beat out  
The Swedes and Saxons from the province.

*Wal.* True  
In that description which the minister gave  
I seemed to have forgotten the whole war.  
[To QUESTENBERG.] Well, but proceed a little.

*Ques.* Yes ! at length  
Beside the river Oder did the Duke  
Assert his ancient fame. Upon the fields  
Of Steinau did the Swedes lay down their arms,  
Subdued without a blow. And here, with others,  
The righteousness of Heaven to his avenger  
Delivered that long-practised stirrer-up  
Of insurrection, that curse-laden torch  
And kindler of this war, Matthias Thurn.  
But he had fallen into magnanimous hands ;  
Instead of punishment he found reward,  
And with rich presents did the Duke dismiss  
The arch-foe of his Emperor.

*Wal. [laughs.]* I know,  
I know you had already in Vienna  
Your windows and balconies all forestalled  
To see him on the executioner's cart.  
I might have lost the battle, lost it too  
With infamy, and still retained your graces—  
But, to have cheated them of a spectacle,



Oh! *that* the good folks of Vienna never,  
No, never can forgive me.

*Ques.*

So Silesia

Was freed, and all things loudly called the Duke  
Into Bavaria, now pressed hard on all sides.  
And he *did* put his troops in motion : slowly,  
Quite at his ease, and by the longest road  
He traverses Bohemia ; but ere ever  
He hath once seen the enemy, faces round,  
Breaks up the march, and takes to winter quar-  
ters.

*Wal.* The troops were pitiably destitute  
Of every necessary, every comfort.  
The winter came. What thinks his Majesty  
His troops are made of? Arn't we men? sub-  
jected

Like other men to wet and cold, and all  
The circumstances of necessity ?  
O miserable lot of the poor soldier !  
Wherever he comes in, all flee before him,  
And when he goes away, the general curse  
Follows him on his route. All must be seized,  
Nothing is given him. And compelled to seize  
From every man, he's every man's abhorrence.  
Behold, here stand my Generals. Karaffa !  
Count Deodati ! Butler ! Tell this man  
How long the soldiers' pay is in arrears.

*But.* Already a full year.

*Wal.*

And 'tis the hire

That constitutes the hireling's name and duties,  
The soldier's *pay* is the soldier's *covenant*.\*

*Qués.* Ah! this is a far other tone from that,  
In which the Duke spoke eight, nine years ago.

*Wal.* Yes! 'tis my fault, I know it: I myself  
Have spoilt the Emperor by indulging him.  
Nine years ago, during the Danish war,  
I raised him up a force, a mighty force,  
Forty or fifty thousand men, that cost him  
Of his own purse no doit. Through Saxony  
The fury goddess of the war marched on,  
E'en to the surf-rocks of the Baltic, bearing  
The terrors of his name. That was a time!  
In the whole Imperial realm no name like mine  
Honoured with festival and celebration—  
And Albrecht Wallenstein, it was the title  
Of the third jewel in his crown!  
But at the Diet, when the Princes met  
At Regensburg, there, there the whole broke out,  
There 'twas laid open, there it was made known,  
Out of what money-bag I had paid the host.  
And what was now my thank, what had I now,

\* The original is not translatable into English;

——— Und sein *Sold*

Muss dem *Soldaten* werden; darnach heisst er.

It might perhaps have been thus rendered:

“And that for which he sold his services,  
The soldier must receive.”

But a false or doubtful etymology is no more than a dull

That I, a faithful servant of the sovereign,  
 Had loaded on myself the people's curses,  
 And let the Princes of the empire pay  
 The expenses of this war, that aggrandizes  
 The Emperor alone—What thanks had I!  
 What? I was offered up to their complaints,  
 Dismissed, degraded!

*Ques.* But your Highness knows  
 What little freedom he possessed of action  
 In that disastrous diet.

*Wal.* Death and hell!  
 I had that which could have procured him free-  
 dom.

No! Since 'twas proved so inauspicious to me  
 To serve the Emperor at the empire's cost,  
 I have been taught far other trains of thinking  
 Of the empire, and the diet of the empire.  
 From the Emperor, doubtless, I received this staff,  
 But now I hold it as the empire's general—  
 For the common weal, the universal int'rest,  
 And no more for that one man's aggrandizement!  
 But to the point. What is it that's desired of me?

*Ques.* First, his imperial Majesty hath willed  
 That without pretexts of delay the army  
 Evacuate Bohemia.

*Wal.* In this season?  
 And to what quarter, wills the Emperor,  
 That we direct our course?

*Ques.* To the enemy.  
 His Majesty resolves, that Regensburg

Be purified from the enemy, ere Easter,  
That Luth'ranism may be no longer preached  
In that cathedral, nor heretical  
Defilement desecrate the celebration  
Of that pure festival.

*Wal.* My generals,  
Can this be realized?

*Illo.* 'Tis not possible.

*But.* It can't be realized.

*Ques.* The Emperor  
Already hath commanded Colonel Suys  
To advance toward Bavaria!

*Wal.* What did Suys?

*Ques.* That which his duty prompted. He advanced!

*Wal.* What? he advanced! And I, his general,  
Had given him orders, peremptory orders,  
Not to desert his station! Stands it thus  
With my authority? Is this th' obedience  
Due to my office, which being thrown aside  
No war can be conducted? Chieftains, speak  
You be the judges, generals! What deserves  
That officer, who of his oath neglectful  
Is guilty of contempt of orders?

*Illo.* [*raising his voice, as all but ILLO had remained silent, and seemingly scrupulous.*] Death.

*Wal.* Count Piccolomini! what has he deserved?

*Max Pic.* [*after a long pause.*] According to  
the letter of the law,

Death.

*Iso.* Death.

*But.* Death, by the laws of war.

[QUESTENBERG rises from his seat, WALLENSTEIN follows; all the rest rise.]

*Wal.* To this the law condemns him, and not I.  
And if I show him favour, 'twill arise  
From the rev'rence that I owe my Emperor.

*Ques.* If so, I can say nothing further—*here!*

*Wal.* I accepted the command but on conditions!

And this the first, that to the diminution  
Of my authority no human being,  
Not even the Emperor's self, should be entitled  
To do aught, or to say aught, with the army.  
If I stand warranter of the *event*,  
Placing my honour and my head in pledge,  
Needs must I have full mastery in all  
The means thereto. What rendered this Gustavus  
Resistless, and unconquered upon earth?  
This—that he was the monarch in his army!  
A monarch, one who is indeed a monarch,  
Was never yet subdued but by his equal.  
But to the point! The best is yet to come.  
Attend now, *generals!*

*Ques.* The Prince Cardinal  
Begins his route at the approach of spring  
From the Milanese; and leads a Spanish army  
Through Germany into the Netherlands.  
That he may march secure and unimpeded,

'Tis th' Emperor's will you grant him a detachment

Of eight horse-regiments from the army here.

*Wal.* Yes, yes! I understand!—Eight regiments! Well,

Right well concerted, father Lamormain!

Eight thousand horse! Yes, yes! 'Tis as it should be!

I see it coming.

*Ques.* There is nothing coming.

All stands in front: the counsel of state-prudence,  
The dictate of necessity!—

*Wal.* What then?

What, my Lord Envoy? May I not be suffered  
To understand, that folks are tired of seeing  
The sword's hilt in *my* grasp: and that your court  
Snatch eagerly at this pretence, and use  
The Spanish title, to drain off my forces,  
To lead into the empire a new army  
Unsubjected to my control. To throw me  
Plumply aside,—I am still too powerful for you  
To venture that. My stipulation runs,  
That all the Imperial forces shall obey me  
Where'er the German is the native language.  
Of Spanish troops and of Prince Cardinals  
That take their route, as visitors, through the empire,

There stands no syllable in my stipulation.

No syllable! And so the politic court

Steals in a-tiptoe, and creeps round behind it:

First makes me weaker, then to be dispensed with,  
Till it dares strike at length a bolder blow  
And make short work with me.

What need of all these crooked ways, Lord En-  
voy !

Straight-forward, man ! His compact with me  
pinches

The Emperor. He would that I moved off!—  
Well !—I will gratify him !

*[Here there commences an agitation among the Generals  
which increases continually.]*

It grieves me for my noble officers' sakes !

I see not yet, by what means they will come at  
The moneys they have advanced, or how obtain  
The recompense their services demand.

Still a new leader brings new claimants forward,  
And prior merit superannuates quickly.

There serve here many foreigners in th' army,  
And were the man in all else brave and gallant,  
I was not wont to make nice scrutiny

After his pedigree or catechism.

This will be otherwise, i' the time to come.

Well—me no longer it concerns. *[He seats himself.]*

*Max Pic.* Forbid it, Heaven, that it should  
come to this !

Our troops will swell in dreadful fermentation—  
The Emperor is abused—it cannot be.

*Iso.* It cannot be ; all goes to instant wreck.

*Wal.* Thou hast said truly, faithful Isolani !

What *we* with toil and foresight have built up,

Will go to wreck—all go to instant wreck.  
 What then? another chieftain is soon found,  
 Another army likewise (who dares doubt it?)  
 Will flock from all sides to the Emperor  
 At the first beat of his recruiting drum.

*[During this speech, ISOLANI, TERTSKY, ILLO, and MARADAS talk confusedly with great agitation.]*

*Max Pic.* *[busily and passionately going from one to another, and soothing them.]* Hear, my commander! Hear me, generals!

Let me conjure you, Duke! Determine nothing,  
 Till we have met and represented to you  
 Our joint remonstrances.—Nay, calmer! Friends!  
 I hope all may be yet set right again.

*Ter.* Away! let us away! in th' antechamber  
 Find we the others. *[They go.]*

*But.* *[to QUESTENBERG.]* If good counsel gain  
 Due audience from your wisdom, my Lord Envoy,  
 You will be cautious how you show yourself  
 In public for some hours to come—or hardly  
 Will that gold key protect you from maltreatment.

*[Commotions heard from without.]*

*Wal.* A salutary counsel—Thou, Octavio,  
 Wilt answer for the safety of our guest.  
 Farewell, Von Questenberg.

*[QUESTENBERG is about to speak.]*

Nay, not a word,  
 Not one word more of that detested subject!



You have performed your duty—We know how  
To separate the office from the man.

[*As QUESTENBERG is going off with OCTAVIO, GOETZ, TIEFENBACH, KOLALTO, press in; several other Generals following them.*

Goetz. Where's he who means to rob us of our  
general?

Tief. [*at the same time.*] What are we forced  
to hear? That thou wilt leave us?

Kol. [*at the same time.*] We will live with thee,  
we will die with thee.

Wal. [*pointing to ILLO.*] There! the Field-  
Marshal knows our will. [*Exit.*

[*While all are going off the stage, the curtain drops.*

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—*A small Chamber.*

ILLO and TERTSKY.

Ter. Now for this evening's business! How  
intend you

To manage with the generals at the banquet?

Illo. Attend! We frame a formal declaration  
Wherein we to the Duke consign ourselves  
Collectively, to be and to remain  
*His* both with life and limb, and not to spare

The last drop of our blood for *him*, provided  
 So doing we infringe no oath nor duty,  
 We may be under to the Emp'ror.—Mark!  
 This reservation we expressly make  
 In a particular clause, and save the conscience.  
 Now hear! This formula so framed and worded  
 Will be presented to them for perusal  
 Before the banquet. No one will find in it  
 Cause of offence or scruple. Hear now further!  
 After the feast, when now the vap'ring wine  
 Opens the heart, and shuts the eyes, we let  
 A counterfeited paper, in the which  
 This one particular clause has been left out,  
 Go round for signatures.

*Ter.*

How? think you then

That they'll believe themselves bound by an  
 oath,

Which we had tricked them into by a juggle?

*Illo.* We shall have caught and caged them!

Let them then

Beat their wings bare against the wires, and rave  
 Loud as they may against our treachery,  
 At court their signatures will be believed  
 Far more than their most holy affirmations.  
 Traitors they are, and must be; therefore wisely  
 Will make a virtue of necessity.

*Ter.* Well, well, it shall content me; let but  
 something

Be *done*, let only some decisive blow  
 Set us in motion.

*Illo.* Besides, 'tis of subordinate importance  
 How, or how far, we may thereby propel  
 The generals. 'Tis enough that we persuade  
 The Duke, that they are his—Let him but act  
 In his determin'd mood, as if he had them,  
 And he *will* have them. Where he plunges in,  
 He makes a whirlpool, and all stream down to it.

*Ter.* His policy is such a labyrinth,  
 That many a time when I have thought myself  
 Close at his side, he's gone at once and left me  
 Ignorant of the ground where I was standing.  
 He lends the enemy his ear, permits me  
 To write to them, to Arnheim; to Sesina  
 Himself comes forward blank and undisguised;  
 Talks with us by the hour about his plans,  
 And when I think I have him—off at once——  
 He has slipped from me, and appears as if  
 He had no scheme, but to retain his place.

*Illo.* He give up his old plans! I'll tell you,  
 friend!

His soul is occupied with nothing else,  
 Even in his sleep—They are his thoughts, his  
 dreams,

That day by day he questions for this purpose  
 The motions of the planets——

*Ter.* Ay! you know  
 This night, that is now coming, he with Seni  
 Shuts himself up in the astrological tower  
 To make joint observations—for I hear,  
 It is to be a night of weight and crisis;

And something great, and of long expectation,  
Is to make its procession in the heaven.

*Illo.* Come! be we bold and make dispatch.

The work

In this next day or two must thrive and grow  
More than it has for years. And let but only  
Things first turn up auspicious here below—  
Mark what I say—the right stars too will show  
themselves.

Come, to the generals. All is in the glow,  
And must be beaten while 'tis malleable.

*Ter.* Do you go thither, *Illo*. I must stay  
And wait here for the Countess Tertsy. Know,  
That we too are not idle. Break one string,  
A second is in readiness.

*Illo.* Yes! Yes!

I saw your lady smile with such sly meaning.  
What's in the wind?

*Ter.* A secret. Hush! she comes.

*Exit ILLO.*

SCENE II.—(*The COUNTESS steps out from a Closet.*)

COUNT and COUNTESS TERTSKY.

*Ter.* Well—is she coming?—I can keep him  
back

No longer.

*Coun.* She will be there instantly,  
You only send him.

*Ter.* I am not quite certain  
I must confess it, Countess, whether or not [know  
We are earning the Duke's thanks hereby. You

No ray has broken from him on this point.  
 You have o'er-ruled me, and yourself know best,  
 How far you dare proceed.

*Coun.*

I take it on me.

*[Talking to herself, while she is advancing.]*

Here's no need of full powers and commissions—  
 My cloudy Duke! we understand each other—  
 And without words. What, could I not unriddle,  
 Wherefore the daughter should be sent for hither,  
 Why first *he*, and no other, should be chosen  
 To fetch her hither? This sham of betrothing her  
 To a bridegroom,\* whom no one knows—No!  
 no!——

This may blind others! I see through thee,  
 Brother!

But it beseems thee not, to draw a card  
 At such a game. Not yet!—It all remains  
 Mutely delivered up to my finessing——  
 Well—thou shalt not have been deceived, Duke  
 Friedland!

In her who is thy sister.——

*Servant [enters.]*

The commanders!

*Ter [to the Countess.]* Take care you heat his  
 fancy and affections——

Possess him with a reverie, and send him,

\* In Germany, after honourable addresses have been paid and formally accepted, the lovers are called Bride and Bridegroom, even though the marriage should not take place till years afterwards.

Absent and dreaming, to the banquet ; that  
He may not boggle at the signature.

*Coun.* Take you care of your guests !—Go,  
send him hither.

*Ter.* All rests upon his undersigning.

*Coun.* [*interrupting him.*] Go to your guests !  
Go——

*Illo.* [*comes back.*] Where art staying, Tertsy ?  
The house is full, and all expecting you.

*Ter.* Instantly ! Instantly ! [*To the COUNTESS.*]  
And let him not

Stay here too long. It might awake suspicion  
In the old man——

*Coun.* A truce with your precautions !

[*Exit TERTSKY and ILLO.*]

SCENE III.—COUNTESS, MAX PICCOLOMINI.

*Max.* [*peeping in on the stage, slyly.*] Aunt  
Tertsy, may I venture ?

[*Advances to the middle of the stage, and looks around him  
with uneasiness.*]

She's not here !

Where is she ?

*Coun.* Look but somewhat narrowly  
In yonder corner, lest perhaps she lie  
Concealed behind that screen.

*Max.* There lie her gloves !

[*Snatches at them, but the COUNTESS takes them herself*]

You unkind lady ! You refuse me this——

You make it an amusement to torment me.

*Coun.* And this the thanks you give me for my trouble?

*Max.* O, if you felt the oppression at *my*  
heart!

Since we've been here, so to constrain myself—  
With such poor stealth to hazard words and  
glances—

These, these are not my habits !

*Coun.* You have still  
Many new habits to acquire, young friend !  
But on this proof of your obedient temper  
I must continue to insist ; and only  
On this condition can I play the agent  
For your concerns.

*Max.* But wherefore comes she not?  
Where is she?

*Coun.* Into *my* hands you must place it  
Whole and entire. Whom could you find, indeed,  
More zealously affected to your interest?  
No soul on earth must know it—not your father.  
*He* must not above all.

*Max.* Alas! what danger?  
Here is no face on which I might concentrate  
All the enraptured soul stirs up within me.  
O lady! tell me. Is all changed around me?  
Or is it only I?

I find myself  
As among strangers! Not a trace is left  
Of all my former wishes, former joys.  
Where has it vanished to? There was a time

When even, methought, with such a world as this  
I was not discontented. Now how flat!

How stale! No life, no bloom, no flavour in it!

My comrades are intolerable to me.

My father—Even to him I can say nothing.

My arms, my military duties—O!

They are such wearying toys!

*Coun.*

But, gentle friend!

I must entreat it of your condescension,

You would be pleased to sink your eye, and favour

With one short glance or two this poor stale world

Where even now much, and of much moment,

Is on the eve of its completion.

*Mac.*

Something,

I can't but know, is going forward round me.

I see it gathering, crowding, driving on,

In wild uncustomary movements. Well,

In due time, doubtless, it will reach even me.

Where think you I have been, dear lady? Nay,

No raillery. The turmoil of the camp,

The spring-tide of acquaintance rolling in,

The pointless jest, the empty conversation,

Oppressed and stifled me. I gasped for air—

I could not breathe—I was constrained to fly,

To seek a silence out for my full heart;

And a pure spot wherein to feel my happiness.

No smiling, Countess! In the church was I.

There is a cloister here to the \* Heaven's Gate,

\* I am doubtful whether this be the dedication of the cloister or the name of one of the city gates, near which it stood.



Thither I went, there found myself alone.  
 Over the altar hung a Holy Mother;  
 A wretched painting 'twas, yet 'twas the friend  
 That I was seeking in this moment. Ah,  
 How oft have I beheld that glorious form  
 In splendour, 'mid ecstastic worshippers,  
 Yet, still it moved me not! and now at once  
 Was my devotion cloudless as my love.

*Coun.* Enjoy your fortune and felicity!  
 Forget the world around you. Meantime, friend-  
 ship

Shall keep strict vigils for you, anxious, active.  
 Only be manageable when that friendship  
 Points you the road to full accomplishment.  
 How long may it be since you declared your  
 passion?

*Max.* This morning did I hazard the first word.

*Coun.* This morning the first time in twenty  
 days?

*Max.* 'Twas at that hunting-castle, betwixt here  
 And Nepomuck, where *you* had joined us, and—  
 That was the last relay of the whole journey!  
 In a balcony we were standing mute,  
 And gazing out upon the dreary field:  
 Before us the dragoons were riding onward,  
 The safe-guard which the Duke had sent us—  
 heavy

I have translated it in the former sense; but fearful of  
 having made some blunder, I add the original.—Es ist ein  
 Kloster hier, zur Himmelspfarte.

The inquietude of parting lay upon me,  
 And trembling ventured I at length these words :  
 This all reminds me, noble maiden, that  
 To-day, I must take leave of my good fortune.  
 A few hours more, and you will find a father,  
 Will see yourself surrounded by new friends,  
 And I henceforth shall be but as a stranger,  
 Lost in the many—"Speak with my Aunt  
 Tertsky!"

With hurrying voice she interrupted me.  
 She faltered. I beheld a glowing red  
 Possess her beautiful cheeks, and from the ground  
 Raised slowly up her eye met mine—no longer  
 Did I control myself.

[The PRINCESS THEKLA appears at the door, and remains standing, observed by the COUNTESS, but not by PICCOLOMINI.]

With instant boldness  
 I caught her in my arms, my mouth touched hers ;  
 There was a rustling in the room close by ;  
 It parted us—'Twas you. What since has  
 happened,  
 You know.

Coun. [after a pause, with a stolen glance at THEKLA.] And is it your excess of modesty ;  
 Or are you so incurious, that you do not  
 Ask me too of my secret?

Max. Of your secret?

Coun. Why, yes ! When in the instant after you  
 I stepped into the room, and found my niece there,

What she in this first moment of the heart,  
Ta'en with surprise—

*Max.* [*with eagerness*] Well.

SCENE IV.—THEKLA (*hurries forward*), COUNTESS, MAX  
PICCOLOMINI.

*Thek.* [*to the COUNTESS.*] Spare yourself the  
trouble:

That hears he better from myself.

*Max.* [*stepping backward.*] My Princess!

What have you let her hear me say, Aunt  
Tertsy?

*Thek.* [*to the COUNTESS.*] Has he been here  
long?

*Coun.* Yes; and soon must go.

Where have you stayed so long?

*Thek.* Alas! my mother

Wept so again! and I—I see her suffer,

Yet cannot keep myself from being happy.

*Max.* Now once again I have courage to look  
on you.

To-day at noon I could not.

The dazzle of the jewels that played round you

Hid the beloved from me.

*Thek.* Then you saw me

With your eye only—and not with your heart?

*Max.* This morning, when I found you in the  
circle

Of all your kindred, in your father's arms,

Beheld myself an alien in this circle,  
O! what an impulse felt I in that moment  
To fall upon his neck, and call him *father*!  
But his stern eye o'erpower'd the swelling passion,  
It dared not but be silent. And those brilliants,  
That like a crown of stars enwreathed your brows,  
They scared me too! O wherefore, wherefore  
should he

At the first meeting spread as 'twere the ban  
Of excommunication round you, wherefore  
Dress up the angel as for sacrifice,  
And cast upon the light and joyous heart  
The mournful burthen of *his* station? Fitly  
May love dare woo for love; but such a splendour

Might none but monarchs venture to approach.

*Thék.* Hush! not a word more of this mummerly,  
You see how soon the burthen is thrown off.

[*To the COUNTESS.*] He is not in spirits. Wherefore is he not?

'Tis you, aunt, that have made him all so gloomy!  
He had quite another nature on the journey—  
So calm, so bright, so joyous, eloquent.

[*To MAX.*] It was my wish to see you always so,  
And never otherwise!

*Max.* You find yourself  
In your great father's arms, beloved lady!  
All in a new world, which does homage to *you*,  
And which, wer't only by its novelty,  
Delights your eye.

*Thek.* Yes; I confess to you  
That many things delight me here: this camp,  
This motley stage of warriors, which renews  
So manifold the image of my fancy,  
And binds to life, binds to reality,  
What hitherto had but been present to me  
As a sweet dream!

*Max.* Alas! not so to me,  
It makes a dream of my reality.  
Upon some island in the ethereal heights  
I've lived for these last days. This mass of men  
Forces me down to earth. It is a bridge  
That, reconducting to my former life,  
Divides me and my heaven.

*Thek.* The game of life  
Looks cheerful, when one carries in one's heart  
The inalienable treasure. 'Tis a game,  
Which having once reviewed, I turn more joyous  
Back to my deeper and appropriate bliss.

*[Breaking off, and in a sportive tone.]*

In this short time that I've been present here,  
What new unheard-of things have I not seen!  
And yet they all must give place to the wonder  
Which this mysterious castle guards.

*Coun.* *[recollecting.]* And what  
Can this be then? Methought I was acquainted  
With all the dusky corners of this house.

*Thek.* Ay, *[smiling,]* but the road thereto is  
watched by spirits.

Two griffins still stand sentry at the door.

*Coun.* [*laughs.*] The astrological tower!—  
How happens it

That this same sanctuary, whose access  
Is to all others so impracticable,  
Opens before you even at your approach?

*Thek.* A dwarfish old man with a friendly face  
And snow-white hairs, whose gracious services  
Were mine at first sight, opened me the doors.

*Max.* That is the Duke's astrologer, old Seni.

*Thek.* He questioned me on many points; for  
instance,

When I was born, what month, and on what day,  
Whether by day or in the night.

*Coun.* He wished

To erect a figure for your horoscope.

*Thek.* My hand too he examined, shook his  
head

With such sad meaning, and the lines, methought,  
Did not square over truly with his wishes.

*Coun.* Well, Princess, and what found you in  
this tower?

My highest privilege has been to snatch  
A side-glance, and away!

*Thek.* It was a strange

Sensation that came o'er me, when at first  
From the broad sunshine I stepped in; and now  
The narrowing line of day-light, that ran after  
The closing door, was gone; and all about me  
Twas pale and dusky night, with many shadows  
Fantastically cast. Here six or seven

Colossal statues, and all kings, stood round me  
 In a half-circle. Each one in his hand  
 A sceptre bore, and on his head a star;  
 And in the tower no other light was there  
 But from these stars: all seemed to come from  
 them.

"These are the planets," said that low old man,  
 "They govern worldly fates, and for that cause  
 Are imaged here as kings. He farthest from you,  
 Spiteful, and cold, an old man melancholy,  
 With bent and yellow forehead, he is Saturn.  
 He opposite, the king with the red light,  
 An armed man for the battle, that is Mars:  
 And both these bring but little luck to man."  
 But at his side a lovely lady stood,  
 The star upon her head was soft and bright,  
 And that was Venus, the bright star of joy.  
 On the left hand, lo! Mercury, with wings.  
 Quite in the middle glittered silver bright  
 A cheerful man, and with a monarch's mien;  
 And this was Jupiter, my father's star:  
 And at his side I saw the Sun and Moon.

*Max.* O never rudely will I blame his faith  
 In the might of stars and angels! 'Tis not merely  
 The human being's Pride that peoples space  
 With life and mystical predominance;  
 Since likewise for the stricken heart of Love  
 This visible nature, and this common world,  
 Is all too narrow: yea, a deeper import  
 Turks in the legend told my infant years

Than lies upon that truth, we live to learn.

For fable is Love's world, his home, his birth-  
place:

Delightedly dwells he 'mong fays and talismans,

And spirits; and delightedly believes

Divinities, being himself divine.

The intelligible forms of ancient poets,

The fair humanities of old religion,

The power, the beauty, and the majesty,

That had their haunts in dale, or piny mountain,

Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,

Or chasms and wat'ry depths; all these have  
vanished;

They live no longer in the faith of reason!

But still the heart doth need a language, still

Doth the old instinct bring back the old names,

And to yon starry world they now are gone,

Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth

With man as with their friend; and to the lover

Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky

Shoot influence down: and even at this day

'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,

And Venus who brings everything that's fair!

*Thek.* And if this be the science of the stars,

I too, with glad and zealous industry,

Will learn acquaintance with this cheerful faith.

It is a gentle and affectionate thought,

That in immeasurable heights above us,

At our first birth, the wreath of love was woven,

With sparkling stars for flowers.



*Coun.* Not only roses,  
But thorns too hath the heaven; and well for you  
Leave they your wreath of love inviolate;  
What Venus twined, the bearer of glad fortune,  
The sullen orb of Mars soon tears to pieces.

*Max.* Soon will his gloomy empire reach its  
close.

Blest be the general's zeal: into the laurel  
Will he inweave the olive-branch, presenting  
Peace to the shouting nations. Then no wish  
Will have remained for his great heart! Enough  
Has he performed for glory, and can now  
Live for himself and his. To his domains  
Will he retire; he has a stately seat  
Of fairest view at Glitschin; Reichenberg,  
And Friedland Castle, both lie pleasantly—  
Even to the foot of the huge mountains here  
Stretches the chase and covers of his forests:  
His ruling passion, to create the splendid,  
He can indulge without restraint; can give  
A princely patronage to every art,  
And to all worth a sovereign's protection;  
Can build, can plant, can watch the starry cour-  
ses—

*Coun.* Yet I would have you look, and look  
again,  
Before you lay aside your arms, young friend!  
A gentle bride, as she is, is well worth it,  
That you should woo and win her with the sword.  
*Max.* O, that the sword could win her!

*Coun.* What was that?  
Did you hear nothing? Seemed, as if I heard  
Tumult and larum in the banquet-room.

[*Exit COUNTESS.*]

SCENE V.—THEKLA and MAX PICCOLOMINI.

*Thek.* [as soon as the COUNTESS is out of sight,  
in a quick low voice to PICCOLOMINI.] Don't trust  
them! They are false!

*Max.* Impossible!

*Thek.* Trust no one here but me. I saw at  
once,

They had a purpose.

*Max.* Purpose! but what purpose?  
And how can we be instrumental to it?

*Thek.* I know no more than you; but yet be-  
lieve me:

There's some design in this! to make us happy,  
To realize our union—trust me, love!

They but pretend to wish it.

*Max.* But these Tertskys—  
Why use we them at all? Why not your mother?  
Excellent creature! she deserves from us  
A full and filial confidence.

*Thek.* She doth love you,  
Doth rate you high before all others—but—  
But such a secret—she would never have  
The courage to conceal it from my father.  
For her own peace of mind we must preserve it  
A secret from her too.

*Max.* Why any secret?

I love not secrets. Mark, what I will do.  
I'll throw me at your father's feet—let *him*  
Decide upon my fortunes!—He is true,  
He wears no mask—he hates all crooked ways—  
He is so good, so noble!

*Thek.* [*falls on his neck.*] That are you!

*Max.* You knew him only since this morn;  
but I

Have lived ten years already in his presence,  
And who knows whether in this very moment  
He is not merely waiting for us both  
To own our loves, in order to unite us.  
You are silent!——

You look at me with such a hopelessness!  
What have you to object against your father?

*Thek.* I? Nothing. Only he's so occupied—  
He has no leisure time to think about  
The happiness of us two. [*Taking his hand tenderly.*  
Follow me!

Let us not place too great a faith in men.  
These Tertslys—we will still be grateful to them  
For every kindness, but not trust them further  
Than they deserve;—and in all else rely——  
On our own hearts!

*Max.* O! shall we e'er be happy?

*Thek.* Are we not happy now? Art thou not  
mine?

Am I not thine? There lives within my soul  
A lofty courage—'tis love gives it me!

I ought to be less open—ought to hide  
 My heart more from thee—so decorum dictates :  
 But where in this place couldst thou seek for  
                   truth,  
 If in my mouth thou didst not find it ?

SCENE VI.—*To them enters the COUNTESS TERTSKY.*

*Coun.* [*in a pressing manner.*]                   Come !  
 My husband sends me for you.—It is now  
 The latest moment. [*they not appearing to attend*  
*to what she says, she steps between them.*]

Part you !

*Thek.*   O, not yet !  
 It has been scarce a moment.

*Coun.*   Ay ! Then time  
 Flies swiftly with your Highness, Princess niece !

*Max.* There is no hurry, aunt.

*Coun.*   Away ! away !  
 The folks begin to miss you. Twice already  
 His father has asked for him.

*Thek.*   Ha ! his father ?

*Coun.* You understand *that*, niece !

*Thek.*   Why needs he  
 To go at all to that society ?  
 'Tis not his proper company. They may  
 Be worthy men, but he's too young for them.  
 In brief, he suits not such society.

*Coun.* You mean, you'd rather keep him wholly  
                   here ?

*Thek.* [*with energy.*] Yes! you have hit it, aunt! That is my meaning.

Leave him here wholly! Tell the company—

*Coun.* What? have you lost your senses, niece?—

Count, you remember the conditions. Come!

*Max.* [*to THEKLA.*] Lady, I must obey. Farewell, dear lady!

[*THEKLA turns away from him with a quick motion.*

What say you then, dear lady?

*Thek.* [*without looking at him.*] Nothing. Go!

*Max.* Can I, when you are angry——

[*He draws up to her, their eyes meet, she stands silent a moment, then throws herself into his arms; he presses her fast to his heart.*

*Coun.* Off! Heavens! if any one should come! Hark! What's that noise? It comes this way.—

Off!

[*MAX tears himself away out of her arms, and goes. The COUNTESS accompanies him. THEKLA follows him with her eyes at first, walks restlessly across the room. then stops, and remains standing, lost in thought. A guitar lies on the table, she seizes it as by a sudden emotion, and after she has played awhile an irregular and melancholy symphony, she falls gradually into the music and sings.*

*Thekla (plays and sings).*

The cloud doth gather, the greenwood roar,  
The damsel paces along the shore;  
The billows they tumble with might, with might;  
And she flings out her voice to the darksome night;

Her bosom is swelling with sorrow;  
 The world it is empty, the heart will die,  
 There's nothing to wish for beneath the sky:  
 Thou Holy One, call thy child away!  
 I've lived and loved, and that was to-day—  
 Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.\*

---

\* I found it not in my power to translate this song with *literal* fidelity, preserving at the same time the *Alcaic* movement; and have therefore added the original with a prose translation. Some of my readers may be more fortunate.

*THEKLA (spielt und singt.)*

Der Eichwald brauset, die Wolken ziehn,  
 Das Mädchen wandelt an Ufers Grün,  
 Es bricht sich die Welle mit Macht, mit Macht,  
 Und sie singt hinaus in die finstre Nacht,  
 Das Auge von Weinen getrübet:  
 Das Herz ist gestorben, die Welt ist leer,  
 Und weiter giebt sie dem Wunsche nichts mehr.  
 Du Heilige, rufe dein Kind zurück,  
 Ich habe genossen das irdische Glück,  
 Ich habe gelebt und geliebet.

*Literal Translation.*

*THEKLA (plays and sings.)*

The oak-forest bellows, the clouds gather, the damsel walks to and fro on the green of the shore; the wave breaks with might, with might, and she sings out into the dark night, her eye discoloured with weeping: The heart is dead, the world is empty, and further gives it nothing more to the wish. Thou Holy One, call thy child home. I have enjoyed the happiness of this world, I have lived and have loved.

I cannot but add here an imitation of this song, with which the author of "The Tale of Rosamund Gray and Blind Margaret" has favoured me, and which appears to me to have caught the happiest manner of our old ballads.

SCENE VII.—COUNTRESS (*returns*,) THEKLA.

*Coun.* Fie, lady niece! to throw yourself upon  
him,

Like a poor gift to one who cares not for it,  
And so must be flung after him! For you,  
Duke Friedland's only child, I should have  
thought,

It had been more beseeching to have shown  
yourself

More chary of your person.

*Thek.* [*rising*.] And what mean you?

*Coun.* I mean, niece, that you should not have  
forgotten

Who *you* are, and who he is. But perchance  
That never once occurred to you.

*Thek.* What then?

*Coun.* That you are the daughter of the Prince  
Duke Friedland.

*Thek.* Well—and what farther?

*Coun.* What? a pretty question!

*Thek.* He was *born* that which we have but  
*become*.

The clouds are blackening, the storms threatening,

The cavern doth mutter, the greenwood moan;

Billows are breaking, the damsel's heart aching,

Thus in the dark night she singeth alone,

Her eye upward roving:

The world is empty, the heart is dead surely,

In this world plainly all seemeth amiss;

To thy heaven, Holy One, take home thy little one,

I have partaken of all earth's bliss,

Both living and loving.

He's of an ancient Lombard family,  
Son of a reigning princess.

*Coun.* Are you dreaming?  
Talking in sleep? An excellent jest, forsooth!  
We shall no doubt right courteously *entreat*  
him

To honour with his hand the richest heiress  
In Europe.

*Thek.* That will not be necessary.

*Coun.* Methinks 'twere well though not to run  
the hazard.

*Thek.* His father loves him, Count Octavio  
Will interpose no difficulty—

*Coun.* *His!*

*His* father! *his!* But yours, niece, what of  
yours?

*Thek.* Why I begin to think you fear his father.  
So anxiously you hide it from the man!

*His* father, *his*, I mean.

*Coun.* [*looks at her as scrutinizing.*] Niece, you  
are *false*.

*Thek.* Are you then wounded? O, be friends  
with me!

*Coun.* You hold your game for won already.  
Do not

Triumph too soon!—

*Thek.* [*interrupting her, and attempting to soothe  
her.*] Nay now, be friends with me

*Coun.* It is not yet so far gone.

*Thek.* I believe you.



*Coun.* Did you suppose your father had laid out  
His most important life in toils of war,  
Denied himself each quiet earthly bliss,  
Had banished slumber from his tent, devoted  
His noble head to care, and for this only,  
To make a happy pair of you? At length  
To draw you from your convent, and conduct  
In easy triumph to your arms the man  
That chanced to please your eyes! All this, me-  
thinks,

He might have purchased at a cheaper rate.

*Thek.* That which he did not plant for me might  
yet

Bear me fair fruitage of its own accord.  
And if my friendly and affectionate fate,  
Out of his fearful and enormous being,  
Will but prepare the joys of life for me—

*Coun.* Thou seest it with a lovelorn maiden's  
eyes.

Cast thine eye round, bethink thee who thou art.  
Into no house of joyance hast thou stepped,  
For no espousals dost thou find the wall  
Decked out, no guests the nuptial garland wearing.  
Here is no splendour but of arms. Or think'st  
thou

That all these thousands are here congregated  
To lead up the long dances at thy wedding?  
Thou seest thy father's forehead full of thought.  
Thy mother's eye in tears: upon the balance  
Lies the great destiny of all our house.

Leave now the puny wish, the girlish feeling,  
 O thrust it far behind thee! Give thou proof,  
 Thou'rt the daughter of the Mighty—*his*  
 Who where he moves creates the wonderful.  
 Not to herself the woman must belong,  
 Annexed and bound to alien destinies.  
 But she performs the best part, she the wisest,  
 Who can transmute the alien into self;  
 Meet and disarm necessity by choice,  
 And what must be, take freely to her heart,  
 And bear and foster it with mother's love.

*Thek.* Such ever was my lesson in the convent.  
 I had no loves, no wishes, knew myself  
 Only as *his*—daughter—*his*, the Mighty!  
 His fame, the echo of whose blast drove to me  
 From the far distance, awakened in my soul  
 No other thought than this—I am appointed  
 To offer up myself in passiveness to him.

*Coun.* That *is* thy fate. Mould thou thy wishes  
 to it.

I and thy mother gave thee the example.

*Thek.* My fate hath shown me *him*, to whom be-  
 hoves it

That I should offer up myself. In gladness  
*Him* will I follow.

*Coun.* Not thy fate hath shown him!  
 Thy heart, say rather—'twas thy heart, my child!

*Thek.* Fate hath no voice but the heart's im-  
 pulses.

I am all *his*! *His* present—his alone,

Is this new life, which lives in me. He hath  
A right to his own creature. What was I  
Ere his fair love infused a soul into me?

*Coun.* Thou wouldst oppose thy father then,  
should he

Have otherwise determined with thy person?

[THEKLA remains silent. The COUNTESS continues.]

Thou mean'st to force him to thy liking?—Child,  
His name is Friedland.

*Thek.* My name too is Friedland.  
He shall have found a genuine daughter in me.

*Coun.* What? he has vanquished all impediment,

And in the wilful mood of his own daughter  
Shall a new struggle rise for him? Child! child!  
As yet thou hast seen thy father's smiles alone;  
The eye of his rage thou hast not seen. Dear  
child,

I will not frighten thee. To that extreme,  
I trust, it ne'er shall come. His will is yet  
Unknown to me: 'tis possible his aims

May have the same direction as thy wish.

But this can never, never be his will

That thou, the daughter of his laughty fortunes,  
Should'st e'er demean thee as a lovesick maiden;

And like some poor cost-nothing, fling thyself

Toward the man, who, *if* that high prize ever

Be destined to await him, yet, with sacrifices

The highest love can bring, must pay for it.

[Exit COUNTESS.]

*Thék.* [*who during the last speech had been lost in her reflections.*] I thank thee for the hint. It turns

My sad presentiment to certainty.  
And it is so!—Not one friend have we here.  
Not one true heart! we've nothing but our-  
selves!

O she said rightly—no auspicious signs  
Beam on this covenant of our affections.  
This is no theatre, where hope abides.  
The dull thick noise of war alone stirs here.  
And love himself, as he were armed in steel,  
Steps forth, and girds him for the strife of death.

*[Music from the banquet-room is heard]*

There's a dark spirit walking in our house,  
And swiftly will the Destiny close on us.  
It drove me hither from my calm asylum,  
It mocks my soul with charming witchery,  
It lures me forward in a seraph's shape,  
I see it near, I see it nearer floating,  
It draws, it pulls me with a god-like power—  
And lo! the abyss—and thither am I moving—  
I have no power within me not to move!

*[The music from the banquet-room becomes louder]*

O when a house is doomed in fire to perish,  
Many a dark heaven drives his clouds together,  
Yea, shoots his lightnings down from sunny  
heights,  
Flames burst from out the subterraneous chasms,

\* And fiends and angels mingling in their fury,  
Sling firebrands at the burning edifice.

[*Exit TREKLA.*]

SCENE VIII.—*A large Saloon lighted up with festal splendour; in the midst of it, and in the centre of the Stage, a Table richly set out, at which eight Generals are sitting, among whom are OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, TERTSKY, and MARADAS. Right and left of this, but farther back, two other Tables, at each of which six Persons are placed. The Middle Door, which is standing open, gives to the Prospect a fourth Table, with the same number of Persons. More forward stands the Sideboard. The whole front of the Stage is kept open for the Pages and Servants in waiting. All is in motion. The band of Music belonging to TERTSKY'S Regiment march across the Stage, and draw up round the Tables. Before they are quite off from the Front of the Stage, MAX PICCOLOMINI appears, TERTSKY advances towards him with a Paper, ISOLANI comes up to meet him with a Beaker or Service-cup.*

TERTSKY, ISOLANI, MAX PICCOLOMINI.

*Iso.* Here, brother, what we love! Why, where  
hast been?

Off to thy place—quick! Tertsy here has given  
The mother's holiday wine up to free booty.

\* There are few who will not have taste enough to laugh at the two concluding lines of this soliloquy; and still fewer, I would fain hope, who would not have been more disposed to shudder, had I given a faithful translation. For the readers of German I have added the original:

Blindwüthend schleudert selbst der Gott der Freude  
Den Pechkranz in das brennende Gebäude.

Here it goes on as at the Heidelberg castle.  
 Already hast thou lost the best. They're giving  
 At yonder table ducal crowns in shares ;  
 There's Sternberg's lands and chattels are put up,  
 With Eggenberg's, Slawata's, Lichtenstein's,  
 And all the great Bohemian feudalities.  
 Be nimble, lad ! and something may turn up  
 For thee—who knows ? off—to thy place ! quick !  
 march !

*Tiefenbach and Goetz.* [call out from the second  
 and third tables.] Count Piccolomini !

*Ter.* Stop, ye shall have him in an instant.--  
 Read

This oath here, whether as 'tis here set forth,  
 The wording satisfies you. They've all read it,  
 Each in his turn, and each one will subscribe  
 His individual signature.

*Max.* [reads.] "Ingratis servire nefas."

*Iso.* That sounds to my ears very much like  
 Latin,

And being interpreted, pray what may't mean ?

*Ter.* No honest man will serve a thankless

*MASCOT.*

*Max.* "Inasmuch as our supreme Commander,  
 the illustrious Duke of Friedland, in consequence  
 of the manifold affronts and grievances which he  
 has received, has expressed his determination to  
 quit the Emperor, but on our unanimous entreaty  
 has graciously consented to remain still with the  
 army, and not to part from us without our appro-

bation thereof, so we, collectively, and *each in particular*, in the stead of an oath personally taken, do hereby oblige ourselves—likewise by him honourably and faithfully to hold, and in nowise whatsoever from him to part, and to be ready to shed for his interests the last drop of our blood, so far, namely, as *our oath to the Emperor will permit it*. [*These last words are repeated by ISOLANI.*] In testimony of which we subscribe our names."

*Ter.* Now!—are you willing to subscribe this paper?

*Iso.* Why should he not? All officers of honour Can do it, ay, must do it.—Pen and ink here!

*Ter.* Nay, let it rest till after meal.

*Iso.* [*drawing Max along.*] Come Max.  
[*Both seat themselves at their table*]

SCENE IX.—TERTSKY, NEUMANN.

*Ter.* [*beckons to NEUMANN, who is waiting at the side-table, and steps forward with him to the edge of the stage.*] Have you the copy with you,

Neumann? Give it.

It may be changed for the other?

*Neu.*

I have copied it

Letter by letter, line by line; no eye  
Would e'er discover other difference,  
Save only the omission of that clause,  
According to your Excellency's order.

*Ter.* Right! lay it yonder, and away with this—  
It has performed its business—to the fire with it—

[*NEUMANN lays the copy on the table, and steps back again to the side table.*]

SCENE X.—*ILLO*. (*comes out from the second chamber,*)

TERTSKY.

*Illo.* How goes it with young Piccolomini?

*Ter.* All right, I think. He has started no objection.

*Illo.* He is the only one I fear about—

He and his father. Have an eye on both!

*Ter.* How looks it at your table: you forget not  
To keep them warm and stirring?

*Illo.* O, quite cordial,  
They are quite cordial in the scheme. We have them.

And 'tis as I predicted, too. Already  
It is the talk, not merely to maintain  
The Duke in station. "Since we're once for all  
Together and unanimous, why not,"  
Says Montecuculi, "ay, why not onward,  
And make conditions with the Emperor  
There in his own Vienna?" Trust me, Count,  
Were it not for these said Piccolomini,  
We might have spared ourselves the cheat.

*Ter.*

And Butler?

How goes it there? Hush!



SCENE XI.—*To them enter BUTLER from the second table.*

*But.* Don't disturb yourselves.

Field Marshal, I have understood you perfectly.

Good luck be to the scheme; and as to me,

*[With an air of mystery]*

You may depend upon me.

*Illo.* *[with vivacity.]* May we, Butler?

*But.* With or without the clause, all one to me!

You understand me? My fidelity

The Duke may put to any proof—I'm with him!

Tell him so! I'm the Emperor's officer,

As long as 'tis his pleasure to remain

The Emperor's general! and Friedland's servant,

As soon as it shall please him to become

His own lord.

*Ter.* You would make a good exchange.

No stern economist, no Ferdinand,

Is he to whom you plight your services.

*But.* *[with a haughty look.]* I do not put up my  
fidelity

To sale, Count Tertsy! Half a year ago

I would not have advised you to have made me

An overture to that, to which I now

Offer myself of my own free accord.—

But that is past! and to the Duke, Field Marshal,

I bring myself together with my regiment.

And mark you, 'tis my humour to believe,

The example which I give will not remain

Without an influence.

*Illo.*

Who is ignorant,

That the whole army look to Colonel Butler,  
As to a light that moves before them?

*But.*

Ey?

Then I repent me not of that fidelity  
Which for the length of forty years I held,  
If in my sixtieth year my old good name  
Can purchase for me a revenge so full.  
Start not at what I say, sir Generals!  
My real motives—they concern not you,  
And you yourselves, I trust, could not expect  
That this your game had crooked *my* judgment—or  
That fickleness, quick blood, or such light cause,  
Had driven the old man from the track of honour,  
Which he so long had trodden.—Come, my friends!  
I'm not thereto determined with less firmness,  
Because I know and have looked steadily  
At that on which I have determined.

*Illo.*

Say,

And speak roundly, what are we to deem you?

*But.* A friend! I give you here my hand! I'm  
yours

With all I have. Not only men, but money  
Will the Duke want.—Go, tell him, sirs!  
I've earned and laid up somewhat in his service,  
I lend it him; and is he my survivor,  
It has been already long ago bequeathed him.  
He is my heir. For me, I stand alone,  
Here in the world; nought know I of the feeling  
That binds the husband to a wife and children.  
My name dies with me, my existence ends.

*Illo.* 'Tis not your money that he needs—a heart  
Like yours weighs tons of gold down, weighs down  
millions !

*But.* I came a simple soldier's boy from Ireland  
To Prague—and with a master, whom I buried.  
From lowest stable duty I climbed up,  
Such was the fate of war, to this high rank  
The plaything of a whimsical good fortune.  
And Wallenstein too is a child of luck,  
I love a fortune that is like my own.

*Illo.* All powerful souls have kindred with each  
other.

*But.* This is an awful moment ! to the brave,  
To the determined, an auspicious moment.  
The Prince of Weimar arms, upon the Maine  
To found a mighty dukedom. He of Halberstadt,  
That Mansfeld, wanted but a longer life  
To have marked out with his good sword a lord-  
ship

That should reward his courage. Who of these  
Equals our Friedland ? There is nothing, nothing  
So high, but he may set the ladder to it !

*Ter.* That's spoken like a man !

*But.* Do you secure the Spaniard and Italian—  
I'll be your warrant for the Scotchman Lesly.  
Come ! to the company !

*Ter.* Where is the master of the cellar ? Ho !  
Let the best wines come up. Ho ! cheerly, boy !  
Luck comes to-day, so give her hearty welcome.

[*Exeunt, each to his table*

SCENE XII.—*The Master of the Cellar advancing with NEUMANN, Servants passing backwards and forwards.*

*Mast. of the Cel.* The best wine! O! if my old mistress, his lady mother, could but see these wild goings on, she would turn herself round in her grave. Yes, yes, sir officer! 'tis all down the hill with this noble house! no end, no moderation! And this marriage with the Duke's sister, a splendid connection, a very splendid connection! but I tell you, sir officer, it bodes no good.

*Neu.* Heaven forbid! Why, at this very moment the whole prospect is in bud and blossom!

*Mast. of the Cel.* You think so?—Well, well! much may be said on that head.

*1st. Ser.* [*comes.*] Burgundy for the fourth table.

*Mast. of the Cel.* Now, sir lieutenant, if this isn't the seventieth flask——

*1st. Ser.* Why, the reason is, that German lord, Tiefenbach, sits at that table.

*Mast. of the Cel.* [*continuing his discourse to NEUMANN.*] They are soaring too high. They would rival kings and electors in their pomp and splendour; and wherever the Duke leaps, not a minute does my gracious master, the Count, loiter on the brink.—[*to the Servants.*]—What do you stand there listening for? I will let you know you have legs presently. Off! see to the tables, see to the flasks! Look there! Count Palfi has an empty glass before him!

*Runner.* [*comes.*] The great service-cup is wanted, sir; that rich gold cup with the Bohemian arms on it. The Count says you know which it is.

*Mast. of the Cel.* Ay! that was made for Frederick's coronation by the artist William—there was not such another prize in the whole booty at Prague.

*Runner.* The same!—a health is to go round in him.

*Mast. of the Cel.* [*shaking his head, while he fetches and rinses the cup.*] This will be something for the tale-bearers—this goes to Vienna.

*Neu.* Permit me to look at it.—Well, this is a cup indeed! How heavy! as well it may be, being all gold.—And what neat things are embossed on it! how natural and elegant they look! There on that first quarter, let me see. That proud Amazon there on horseback, she that is taking a leap over the crosier and mitres, and carries on a wand a hat together with a banner, on which there's a goblet represented. Can you tell me what all this signifies?

*Mast. of the Cel.* The woman whom you see there on horseback, is the Free Election of the Bohemian Crown. That is signified by the round hat, and by that fiery steed on which she is riding. The hat is the pride of man; for he who cannot keep his hat on before kings and emperors is no free man.

*Neu.* But what is the cup there on the banner?

*Mast. of the Cel.* The cup signifies the freedom of the Bohemian Church, as it was in our forefathers' times. Our forefathers in the wars of the Hussites forced from the Pope this noble privilege: for the Pope, you know, will not grant the cup to any layman. Your true Moravian values nothing beyond the cup; it is his costly jewel, and has cost the Bohemians their precious blood in many and many a battle.

*Neu.* And what says that chart that hangs in the air there, over it all?

*Mast. of the Cel.* That signifies the Bohemian letter royal, which we forced from the Emperor Rudolph—a precious, never-to-be-enough valued parchment, that secures to the new Church the old privileges of free ringing and open psalmody. But since he of Steiermark has ruled over us, that is at an end; and after the battle at Prague, in which Count Palatine Frederick lost crown and empire, our faith hangs upon the pulpit and the altar—and our brethren look at their homes over their shoulders; but the letter royal the Emperor himself cut to pieces with his scissors.

*Neu.* Why, my good Master of the Cellar! you are deep read in the chronicles of your country!

*Mast. of the Cel.* So were my forefathers, and for that reason were they minstrels, and served under Procopius and Ziska. Peace be with their ashes! Well, well! they fought for a good cause though—There! carry it up!

*Nau.* Stay! let me but look at this second quarter. Look *there!* That is, when at Prague Castle the Imperial Counsellors, Martinitz and Slawata, were hurled down head over heels. 'Tis even so! there stands Count Thurn who commands it.

[*Runner takes the service-cup and goes off with it.*]

*Mast. of the Cel.* O let me never more hear of that day. It was the three-and-twentieth of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand, six hundred, and eighteen. It seems to me as it were but yesterday—from that unlucky day it all began, all the heart-aches of the country. Since that day it is now sixteen years, and there has never once been peace on the earth.

[*Health drunk aloud at the second table.*]

The Prince of Weimar! Hurra!

[*At the third and fourth table.*]

Long live Prince William! Long live Duke Bernard! Hurra!

[*Music strikes up.*]

*1st Ser.* Hear'em! Hear'em! What an uproar!

*2nd Ser.* [*comes in running.*] Did you hear? They have drunk the Prince of Weimar's health.

*3rd Ser.* The Swedish Chief Commander!

*1st Ser.* [*speaking at the same time.*] The Lutheran!

*2nd Ser.* Just before when Count Deodati gave out the Emperor's health, they were all as mum as a nibbling mouse.

*Mast. of the Cel.* Poh, poh! When the wine

goes in, strange things come out. A good servant hears, and hears not!—You should be nothing but eyes and feet, except when you are called.

*2nd Ser.* [*to the Runner, to whom he gives secretly a flask of wine, keeping his eye on the Master of the Cellar, standing between him and the Runner.*] Quick, Thomas! before the Master of the Cellar runs this way!—'tis a flask of Frontignac!—Snapped it up at the third table.—Canst go off with it?

*Ran.* [*hides it in his pocket.*] All right!

[*Exit the Second Servant.*]

*3rd Ser.* [*aside to the First.*] Be on the hark, Jack! that we may have right plenty to tell to Father Quivoga—He will give us right plenty of absolution in return for it.

*1st Ser.* For that very purpose I am always having something to do behind Illo's chair.—He is the man for speeches to make you stare with!

*Mast. of the Cel.* [*to NEUMANN.*] Who, pray, may that swarthy man be, he with the cross, that is chatting so confidentially with Esterhats?

*Neu.* Ay! he too is one of those to whom they confide too much. He calls himself Maradas, a Spaniard is he.

*Mast. of the Cel.* [*impatiently.*] Spaniard! Spaniard!—I tell you, friend; nothing good comes of those Spaniards. All these outlandish \* fellows are little better than rogues.

\* There is a humour in the original which cannot be given



*Neu.* *Fy, fy!* you should not say so, friend. There are among them our very best generals, and those on whom the Duke at this moment relies the most.

*Mast. of the Cell.* [*taking the flask out of the Runner's pocket.*] My son, it will be broken to pieces in your pocket.

[*TERTSKY hurries in, fetches away the paper, and calls to a Servant for pen and ink, and goes to the back of the stage.*

*Mast. of the Cel.* [*to the Servants.*] The Lieutenant-General stands up.—Be on the watch.—Now! They break up.—Off, and move back the forms.

[*They rise at all the tables; the Servants hurry off the front of the stage to the tables; part of the Guests come forward.*

SCENE XIII.—OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI enters in conversation with MARADAS, and both place themselves quite on the edge of the stage on one side of the proscenium. On the side directly opposite, MAX PICCOLOMINI, by himself, lost in thought, and taking no part in any thing that is going forward. The middle space between both, but rather more distant from the edge of the stage, is filled up by BUTLER, ISOLANI, GOETZ, TIEFENBACH, and KO-LALTO.

in the translation. "Die Welschen alle," &c. which word in classical German means the *Italians* alone; but in its first sense, and at present in the *vulgar* use of the word, signifies foreigners in general. Our word wall-nuts, I suppose, means *outlandish* nuts—Walla' nüsse, in German "Welsch-nüsse."

*Iso.* [*while the company is coming forward.*] Good night, good night, Kolalto! Good night, Lieutenant-General!—I should rather say, good morning.

*Goetz.* [*to TIEFENBACH, making the usual compliment after meals.*] Noble brother!

*Tief.* Ay! 'twas a royal feast indeed.

*Goetz.* Yes, my Lady Countess understands these matters. Her mother-in-law, heaven rest her soul, taught her!—Ah! that was a housewife for you!

*Tief.* There was not her like in all Bohemia for setting out a table.

*Oct.* [*aside to MARADAS.*] Do me the favour to talk to me—talk of what you will—or of nothing. Only preserve the appearance at least of talking. I would not wish to stand by myself, and yet I conjecture that there will be goings on here worthy of our attentive observation.

[*He continues to fix his eye on the whole following scene.*]

*Iso.* [*on the point of going.*] Lights! lights!

*Ter.* [*advances with the paper to ISOLANI.*] Noble brother! two minutes longer!—Here is something to subscribe.

*Iso.* Subscribe as much as you like—but you must excuse me from reading it.

*Ter.* There is no need. It is the oath which you have already read.—Only a few marks of your pen!

[*ISOLANI hands over the paper to OCTAVIO respectfully*]

*Ter.* Nay, nay, first come first served. There is no precedence here.

[*OCTAVIO runs over the paper with apparent indifference. TERTSKY watches him at some distance.*

*Goetz.* [to *TERTSKY.*] Noble Count ! with your permission—Good night.

*Ter.* Where's the hurry ? Come, one other composing draught. [To the Servants.]—Ho !

*Goetz.* Excuse me—an't able.

*Ter.* A thimble-full !

*Goetz.* Excuse me.

*Tief.* [*sits down.*] Pardon me, nobles !—This standing does not agree with me.

*Ter.* Consult only your own convenience, General !

*Tief.* Clear at head, sound in stomach—only my legs won't carry me any longer.

*Iso.* [*pointing at his corpulence.*] Poor legs ! how should they ? Such an unmerciful load !

[*OCTAVIO subscribes his name, and reaches over the paper to TERTSKY, who gives it to ISOLANI ; and he goes to the table to sign his name.*

*Tief.* 'Twas that war in Pomerania that first brought it on. Out in all weathers—ice and snow—no help for it.—I shall never get the better of it all the days of my life.

*Goetz.* Why, in simple verity, your Swede makes no nice inquiries about the season.

*Ter.* [*observing ISOLANI, whose hand trembles excessively, so that he can scarce direct his pen.*]

Have you had that ugly complaint long, noble brother?—Dispatch it.

*Iso.* The sins of youth! I have already tried the Chalybeate waters. Well—I must bear it.

*[TERTSKY gives the paper to MARADAS; he steps to the table to subscribe.]*

*Oct.* *[advancing to BUTLER.]* You are not over fond of the orgies of Bacchus, Colonel! I have observed it. You would, I think, find yourself more to your liking in the uproar of a battle, than of a feast.

*But.* I must confess, 'tis not in my way.

*Oct.* *[stepping nearer to him, friendly.]* Nor in mine either, I can assure you; and I am not a little glad, my much honoured Colonel Butler, that we agree so well in our opinions. A half dozen good friends at most, at a small round table, a glass of genuine Tokay, open hearts, and a rational conversation—that's my taste!

*But.* And mine too, when it can be had.

*[The paper comes to TIEFENBACH, who glances over it at the same time with GOETZ and KOLALTO. MARADAS in the mean time returns to OCTAVIO; all this takes place, the conversation with BUTLER proceeding uninterrupted.]*

*Oct.* *[introducing MARADAS to BUTLER.]* Don Balthasar Maradas! likewise a man of our stamp, and long ago your admirer. *[BUTLER bows.]*

*Oct.* *[continuing.]* You are a stranger here—'twas but yesterday you arrived—you are ignorant of the ways and means here. 'Tis a wretched

place—I know, at our age, one loves to be snug and quiet—What if you moved your lodgings?—Come, be my visitor. [BUTLER makes a low bow.] Nay, without compliment!—For a friend like you, I have still a corner remaining.

*But.* [coldly.] Your obliged humble servant, My Lord Lieutenant-General!

[*The paper comes to BUTLER, who goes to the table to subscribe it. The front of the stage is vacant, so that both the PICCOLOMINIS, each on the side where he had been from the commencement of the scene, remain alone.*]

*Oct.* [after having some time watched his son in silence, advances somewhat nearer to him.] You were long absent from us, friend!

*Max.* I——urgent business detained me.

*Oct.* And, I observe, you are still absent!

*Max.* You know this crowd and bustle always makes me silent.

*Oct.* May I be permitted to ask what business 'twas that detained you? *Tertsy* knows it without asking!

*Max.* What does *Tertsy* know?

*Oct.* He was the only one who did not miss you.

*Iso.* [who has been attending to them from some distance, steps up.] Well done, father! Rout out his baggage! Beat up his quarters! there is something there that should not be.

*Ter.* [with the paper.] Is there none wanting? Have the whole subscribed?

*Oct.* All.

*Ter.* [*calling aloud.*] Ho! Who subscribes?

*But.* [*to TERTSKY.*] Count the names. There ought to be just thirty.

*Ter.* Here is a cross.

*Tief.* That's my mark.

*Iso.* He cannot write; but his cross is a good cross, and is honoured by Jews as well as Christians.

*Oct.* [*presses on to MAX.*] Come, General! let us go. It is late.

*Ter.* One Piccolomini only has signed.

*Iso.* [*pointing to MAX.*] Look! that is your man, that statue there, who has had neither eye, ear, nor tongue for us the whole evening.

[*MAX receives the paper from TERTSKY, which he looks upon vacantly.*]

SCENE XIV.—*To these enter ILLO from the inner room. He has in his hand the golden service-cup, and is extremely distempered with drinking; GOETZ and BUTLER follow him, endeavouring to keep him back.*

*Illo.* What do you want? Let me go.

*Goetz and But.* Drink no more, Illo! For heaven's sake drink no more.

*Illo.* [*goes up to OCTAVIO and shakes him cordially by the hand, and then drinks.*] Octavio! I bring this to you. Let all grudge be drowned in this friendly bowl! I know well enough, ye never loved me—Devil take me!—and I never loved

you!—I am always even with people in that way!—Let what's past be past—that is, you understand—forgotten! I esteem you infinitely. [*Embracing him repeatedly.*] You have not a dearer friend on earth than I—but that you know. The fellow that cries rogue to you calls me villain—and I'll strangle him!—my dear friend!

*Ter.* [*whispering to him.*] Art in thy senses? For heaven's sake, Illo! think where you are!

*Illo.* [*aloud.*] What do you mean?—There are none but friends here, are there? [*Looks round the whole circle with a jolly and triumphant air.*] Not a sneaker among us, thank heaven!

*Ter.* [*to BUTLER, eagerly.*] Take him off with you, force him off, I entreat you, Butler!

*But.* [*to ILLO.*] Field Marshal! a word with you! [*Leads him to the side-board.*]

*Illo.* A thousand for one; Fill—fill it once more up to the brim.—To this gallant man's health!

*Iso.* [*to MAX who all the while has been staring on the paper with fixed but vacant eyes.*] Slow and sure, my noble brother?—Hast parsed it all yet?—Some words yet to go through?—Ha?

*Max.* [*waking up as from a dream.*] What am I to do?

*Ter.* [*and at the same time ISOLANI.*] Sign your name.

[OCTAVIO directs his eyes on him with intense anxiety]

*Max.* [*returns the paper.*] Let it stay till to-

to-morrow. It is business—to-day I am not sufficiently collected. Send it to me to-morrow.

*Ter.* Nay, collect yourself a little.

*Iso.* Awake, man! awake!—Come, thy signature, and have done with it! What? Thou art the youngest in the whole company, and wouldst be wiser than all of us together? Look there! thy father has signed—we have all signed.

*Ter.* [*to OCTAVIO.*] Use your influence. Instruct him.

*Oct.* My son is at the age of discretion.

*Illo.* [*leaves the service-cup on the side-board.*]

What's the dispute?

*Ter.* He declines subscribing the paper.

*Max.* I say, it may as well stay till to-morrow.

*Illo.* It cannot stay. We have all subscribed to it—and so must you.—You must subscribe.

*Max.* Illo; good night!

*Illo.* No! You come not off so! The Duke shall learn who are his friends.

[*All collect round ILLO and MAX.*]

*Max.* What my sentiments are towards the Duke the Duke knows, every one knows—what need of this wild stuff?

*Illo.* This is the thanks the Duke gets for his partiality to Italians and foreigners.—Us Bohe-  
mians he holds for little better than dullards—nothing pleases him but what's outlandish.

*Ter.* [*in extreme embarrassment, to the Commanders, who at ILLO'S words give a sudden*



*start, as preparing to resent them.]* It is the wine that speaks, and not his reason. Attend not to him, I entreat you.

*Iso. [with a bitter laugh.]* Wine invents nothing: it only tattles.

*Illo.* He who is not with me, is against me  
Your tender consciences! Unless they can slip out by a back-door, by a puny proviso——

*Ter. [interrupting him.]* He is stark mad—don't listen to him!

*Illo. [raising his voice to the highest pitch.]* Unless they can slip out by a proviso. What of the proviso? The devil take this proviso!

*Max. [has his attention roused and looks again into the paper.]* What is there here then of such perilous import? You make me curious—I must look closer at it.

*Ter. [in a low voice to ILLO.]* What are you doing, Illo? You are ruining us.

*Tief. [to KOLALTO.]* Ay, ay! I observed, that before we sat down to supper, it was read differently.

*Goetz.* Why, I seemed to think so too.

*Iso.* What do I care for that? Where there stand other names, mine can stand too.

*Tief.* Before supper there *was* a certain proviso therein, or short clause concerning our duties to the Emperor.

*But. [to one of the Commanders.]* For shame, for shame! Bethink you. What is the main

business here? The question now is, whether we shall keep our General, or let him retire. One must not take these things too nicely and over-scrupulously.

*Iso.* [*to one of the Generals.*] Did the Duke make any of these provisos when he gave you your regiment?

*Ter.* [*to GOETZ.*] Or when he gave you the office of army purveyancer, which brings you in yearly a thousand pistoles!

*Illo.* He is a rascal who makes us out to be rogues. If there be any one that wants satisfaction, let him say so, I am his man.

*Tief.* Softly, softly! 'Twas but a word or two.

*Max.* [*having read the paper gives it back.*] Till to-morrow, therefore!

*Illo.* [*stammering with rage and fury, loses all command over himself, and presents the paper to MAX with one hand, and his sword in the other.*] Subscribe—Julias!

*Iso.* Out upon you, Illo!

*Oct. Ter. But.* [*all together.*] Down with the sword!

*Max.* [*rushes on him suddenly and disarms him, then to COUNT TERTSKY.*] Take him off to bed.

[*MAX leaves the stage. ILLO cursing and raving is held back by some of the officers, and amidst a universal confusion the curtain drops.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in PICCOLOMINI'S Mansion. It is Night.* OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI. *A Valet de Chambre, with Lights.*

*Oct.* ——— And when my son comes in, conduct him hither.

What is the hour?

*Valet.* 'Tis on the point of morning.

*Oct.* Set down the light. We mean not to undress.

*You may retire to sleep.*

*[Exit Valet. OCTAVIO paces, musing, across the Chamber. MAX PICCOLOMINI enters unobserved, and looks at his father for some moments in silence.]*

*Max.* Art thou offended with me? Heaven knows

That odious business was no fault of mine.

'Tis true, indeed, I saw thy signature.

What thou hadst sanctioned, should not, it might seem,

Have come amiss to me. But—'tis my nature—  
Thou know'st that in such matters I must follow  
My own light, not another's.

*Oct.* *[goes up to him and embraces him.]* Follow it,

O follow it still further, my best son!  
To-night, dear boy! it hath more faithfully  
Guided thee than the example of thy father.

*Max.* Declare thyself less darkly.

*Oct.*

*I will do so,*

For after what has taken place this night,  
There must remain no secrets 'twixt us two.

*[Both seat themselves]*

*Max.* Piccolomini! what think'st thou of  
The oath that was sent round for signatures?

*Max.* I hold it for a thing of harmless import,  
Although I love not these set declarations.

*Oct.* And on no other ground hast thou refused  
The signature they fain had wrested from thee?

*Max.* It was a serious business—I was absent—

The affair itself seemed not so urgent to me.

*Oct.* Be open, *Max.* Thou hadst then no suspicion?

*Max.* Suspicion! what suspicion? Not the least.

*Oct.* Thank thy good angel, Piccolomini:  
He drew thee back unconscious from the abyss.

*Max.* I know not what thou meanest.

*Oct.*

*I will tell thee*

Fain would they have extorted from thee, son,  
The sanction of thy name to villany;  
Yea, with a single flourish of thy pen,  
Made thee renounce thy duty and thy honour!

*Max.* *[rises.]* Octavio!

*Oct.* Patience! Seat yourself. Much yet  
Hast thou to hear from me, friend!—hast for years  
Lived in incomprehensible illusion.  
Before thine eyes is treason drawing out  
As black a web as e'er was spun for venom:  
A power of hell o'erclouds thy understanding.  
I dare no longer stand in silence—dare  
No longer see thee wandering on in darkness,  
Nor pluck the bandage from thine eyes.

*Max.*

*My father.*

Yet, ere thou speak'st, a moment's pause of  
thought!

If your disclosures should appear to be  
Conjectures only—and almost I fear  
They will be nothing further—spare them! I  
Am not in that collected mood at present,  
That I could listen to them quietly.

*Oct.* The deeper cause thou hast to hate this  
light,

The more impatient cause have I, my son,  
To force it on thee. To the innocence  
And wisdom of thy heart I could have trusted  
thee

With calm assurance—but I see the net  
Preparing—and it is thy heart itself  
Alarms me for thine innocence—that secret,  
[*Fixing his eye steadfastly on his son's face.*]  
Which thou concealest, forces mine from me.

[*MAX attempts to answer, but hesitates and casts his  
eyes to the ground, embarrassed.*]

*Oct.* [*after a pause.*] Know, then, they are  
duping thee!—a most foul game  
With thee and with us all—nay, hear me calmly—  
The Duke even now is playing. He assumes  
The mask, as if he would forsake the army:  
And in this moment makes he preparations  
That army from the Emperor to *steal*,  
And carry it over to the enemy!

*Mix.* That low priest's legend I know well, but  
did not  
Expect to hear it from thy mouth.

*Oct.* That mouth,  
From which thou hearest it at this present mo-  
ment,  
Doth warrant thee that it is no priest's legend.

*Mix.* How more a maniac they supposed the  
Duke;  
What, he can meditate?—the Duke?—can dream  
That he can lure away full thirty thousand  
Tried troops and true, all honourable soldiers,  
More than a thousand noblemen among them,  
From oaths, from duty, from their honour lure  
them,

And make them all unanimous to do  
A deed that brands them scoundrels?

*Oct.* Such a deed  
With such a front of infamy, the Duke  
No wise desires—what he requires of us  
Bears a far gentler appellation. Nothing  
He wishes, but to give the Empire peace.

And so, because the Emperor hates *this* peace,  
Therefore the Duke—the Duke will *force* him  
to it.

All parts of the Empire will he pacify,  
And for his trouble will retain in payment  
(What he has already in his gripe)—Bohemia !

*Max.* Has he, Octavio, merited of us,  
That we—that we should think so vilely of him ?

*Oct.* What *we would* think is not the question  
here.

The affair speaks for itself—and clearest proofs !  
Hear me, my son—'tis not unknown to thee,  
In what ill credit with the Court we stand.  
But little dost thou know, or guess, what tricks,  
What base intrigues, what lying artifices,  
Have been employed—for this sole end—to sow  
Mutiny in the camp ! All bands are loosed—  
Loosed all the bands, that link the officer  
To his liege Emperor, all that bind the soldier  
Affectionately to the citizen.

Lawless he stands, and threateningly beleaguers  
The state he's bound to guard. To such a  
height

'Tis sworn, that at this hour the Emperor  
Before his armies—his own armies—trembles ;  
Yea, in his capital, his palace, fears  
The traitor's poniards, and is meditating  
To hurry off and hide his tender offspring—  
Not from the Swedes, not from the Lutherans—  
No ; from his own troops hide and hurry them !

*Mac.* Cease, cease ! thou torturest, shatter'st  
me. I know

That oft we tremble at an empty terror ;  
But the false phantasm brings a real misery.

*Oct.* It is no phantasm. An intestine war,  
Of all the most unnatural and cruel,  
Will burst out into flames, if instantly  
We do not fly and stifle it. The Generals  
Are many of them long ago won over ;  
The subalterns are vacillating—whole  
Regiments and garrisons are vacillating.  
To foreigners our strong-holds are entrusted ;  
To that suspected Schaigot-ch is the whole  
Force of Silesia given up : to Tertsky  
Five regiments, foot and horse—to Isolani,  
To Illo, Kinsky, Butler, the best troops.

*Mac.* Likewise to both of us.

*Oct.* Because the Duke  
Believes he has secured us—means to lure us,  
Still further on by splendid promises.  
To me he portions forth the principedoms, Glatz  
And Sagan ; and too plain I see the angle  
With which he doubts not to catch thee.

*Mac.* No ! no !  
I tell thee—no !

*Oct.* O open yet thine eyes !  
And to what purpose think'st thou he has  
called us  
Hither to Pilsen ?—to avail himself  
Of our advice ?—O when did Friedland ever



Need our advice?—Be calm, and listen to me.

To sell ourselves are we called hither, and,

Decline we that—to be his hostages.

Therefore doth noble Gallas stand aloof!

Thy father, too, thou would'st not have seen here,

If higher duties had not held him fettered.

*Max.* He makes no secret of it—needs make  
none—

That we're called hither for his sake—he owns it

He needs our aidance to maintain himself—

He did so much for us ; and 'tis but fair

That we too should do somewhat now for him.

*Oct.* And know'st thou what it is which we  
must do ?

That Illo's drunken mood betrayed it to thee.

Bethink thyself—what hast thou heard, what  
seen ?

The counterfeited paper—the omission

Of that particular clause, so full of meaning,

Does it not prove, that they would bind us down

To nothing good ?

*Max.* That counterfeited paper

Appears to me no other than a trick

Of Illo's own device. These underhand

Traders in great men's interests ever use

To urge and hurry all things to the extreme.

They see the Duke at variance with the court,

And fondly think to serve him, when they widen

The breach irreparably. Trust me, father,

The Duke knows nothing of all this.

*Oct.*

It grieves me

That I must dash to earth, that I must shatter  
 A faith so specious; but I may not spare thee!  
 For this is not a time for tenderness.

Thou must take measures, speedy ones—must act.  
 I therefore will confess to thee, that all  
 Which I've entrusted to thee now—that all  
 Which seems to thee so unbelievable,  
 That—yes, I will tell thee—[*A pause.*] Max! I  
     had it all

From his own mouth—from the Duke's mouth I  
     had it.

*Max.* [*in excessive agitation.*] No!—no!—  
     never!

*Oct.*

Himself confided to me,

What I, 'tis true, had long before discovered  
 By other means—himself confided to me,  
 That 'twas his settled plan to join the Swedes;  
 And, at the head of the united armies,  
**Compel the Emperor——**

*Max.*

He is passionate,

The Court has stung him—he is sore all over  
 With injuries and affronts; and in a moment  
 Of irritation, what if he, for once,  
 Forgot himself? He's an impetuous man.

*Oct.* Nay, in cold blood he did confess this to me  
 And having construed my astonishment  
 Into a scruple of his power, he showed me  
 His written evidences—showed me letters,  
 Both from the Saxon and the Swede, that gave

Promise of aidance, and defin'd th' amount.

*Max.* It cannot be!—can *not* be! *can* not be!

Dost thou not see, it cannot!

Thou wouldest of necessity have shown him

Such horror, such deep loathing—that or he

Had tak'n thee for his better genius, or

Thou stood'st not now a living man before me—

*Oct.* I have laid open my objections to him,

Dissuaded him with pressing earnestness ;

But my *abhorrence*, the full sentiment

Of my *whole* heart—that I have still kept sacred

To my own consciousness.

*Max.*

And *thou* hast been

So treacherous ! That looks not like my father !

I trusted not thy words, when thou didst tell me

Evil of him ; much less can I *now* do it,

That thou calumniatest thy own self.

*Oct.* I did not thrust myself into his secrecy.

*Max.* Uprightness merited his confidence.

*Oct.* He was no longer worthy of sincerity.

*Max.* Dissimulation, sure, was still less worthy

Of thee, Octavio !

*Oct.*

Gave I him a cause

To entertain a scruple of my honour ?

*Max.* That he did not, evinc'd his confidence.

*Oct.* Dear son, it is not always possible

Still to preserve that infant purity

Which the voice teaches in our inmost heart.

Still in alarm, for ever on the watch

Against the wiles of wicked men, e'en Virtue

Will sometimes bear away her outward robes  
Soiled in the wrestle with Iniquity.  
This is the curse of every evil deed,  
That, propagating still, it brings forth evil.  
I do not cheat my better soul with sophisms ;  
I but perform my orders ; the Emperor  
Prescribes my conduct to me. Dearest boy,  
Far better were it, doubtless, if we all  
Obedyed the heart at all times ; but so doing,  
In this our present sojourn with bad men,  
We must abandon many an honest object.  
'Tis now our call to serve the Emperor  
By what means he can best be served—the heart  
May whisper what it will—this is our call !

*Max.* It seems a thing appointed, that to-day  
I should not comprehend, not understand thee.  
The Duke thou say'st did honestly pour out  
His heart to thee, but for an evil purpose ;  
And thou dishonestly hast cheated him  
For a good purpose ! Silence, I entreat thee—  
My friend thou stealest not from me—  
Let me not lose my father !

*Oct.* [*suppressing resentment.*] As yet thou  
know'st not all, my son. I have  
Yet somewhat to disclose to thee. [*After a pause*

Duke Friedland

Hath made his preparations. He relies  
Upon his stars. He deems us unprovided,  
And thinks to fall upon us by surprise.  
Yea, in his dream of hope, he grasps already

The golden circle in his hand. He errs.  
We too have been in action—he but grasps  
His evil fate, most evil, most mysterious!

*Max.* O nothing rash, my sire! By all that's  
good

Let me invoke thee—no precipitation!

*Oct.* With light tread stole he on his evil way,  
With light tread Vengeance stole on after him.  
Unseen she stands already, dark behind him—  
But one step more—he shudders in her grasp!  
Thou hast seen Questenberg with me. As yet  
Thou know'st but his ostensible commission;  
He brought with him a *private* one, my son!  
And that was for me only.

*Max.* May I know it?

*Oct.*

*Max!*

[*A pause*

——In this disclosure place I in thy hands  
The Empire's welfare and thy father's life.  
Dear to thy inmost heart is Wallenstein:  
A powerful tie of love, of veneration,  
Hath knit thee to him from thy earliest youth.  
Thou nourishest the *wish*—O let me still  
Anticipate thy loitering confidence!  
The *hope* thou nourishest to knit thyself  
Yet closer to him——

*Max.* Father——

*Oct.* O my son,

I trust thy heart undoubtingly. But am I  
Equally sure of thy collectedness?

Wilt thou be able, with calm countenance,  
To enter this man's presence, when that I  
Have trusted to thee his whole fate?

Max.

According

As thou dost trust me, father, with his crime.

[OCTAVIO takes a paper out of his *escrutoire*, and gives it to him.]

Max. What? how? a full Imperial patent!

Oct.

Read it.

Max. [*just glances on it.*] Duke Friedland  
sentenced and condemned!

Oct.

Even so.

Max. [*throws down the paper.*] O this is too  
much! O unhappy error!

Oct. Read on. Collect thyself.

Max. [*after he has read further, with a look of  
affright and astonishment on his father.*] How!  
what! Thou! thou!

Oct. But for the present moment, till the King  
Of Hungary may safely join the army,  
Is the command assigned to me.

Max.

And think'st thou,

Dost thou believe, that thou wilt tear it from him?  
O never hope it!—Father! father! father!

An inauspicious office is enjoined thee.

This paper here—this! and wilt thou enforce it?

The mighty in the middle of his host,

Surrounded by his thousands, him would'st thou

Disarm—degrade! Thou art lost, both thou and  
all of us.

*Oct.* What hazard I incur thereby, I know.  
In the great hand of God I stand. The Al-  
mighty

Will cover with his shield the Imperial house,  
And shatter, in his wrath, the work of darkness.  
The Emperor hath true servants still; and even  
Here in the camp, there are enough brave men,  
Who for the good cause will fight gallantly.  
The faithful have been warned—the dangerous  
Are closely watched. I wait but the first step,  
And then immediately——

*Max.* What! on suspicion?  
Immediately?

*Oct.* The Emperor is no tyrant.  
The deed alone he'll punish, not the wish.  
The Duke hath yet his destiny in his power.  
Let him but leave the treason uncompleted,  
He will be silently displaced from office,  
And make way to his Emperor's royal son.  
An honourable exile to his castles  
Will be a benefaction to him rather  
Than punishment. But the first open step——

*Max.* What callest thou such a step? A  
wicked step

Ne'er will he take; but thou might'st easily,  
Yea, thou hast done it, misinterpret him.

*Oct.* Nay, howsoever punishable were  
Duke Friedland's purposes, yet still the steps  
Which he hath taken openly, permit  
A mild construction. It is my intention

To leave this paper wholly unforced  
Till some act is committed which convicts him  
Of a high treason, without doubt or plea,  
And that shall sentence him.

*Max.* But who the judge?

*Oct.* Thyself.

*Max.* For ever, then, this paper will lie idle.

*Oct.* Too soon, I fear, its powers must all be  
proved.

After the counter-promise of this evening,  
It cannot be but he must deem himself  
Secure of the majority with us;  
And of the army's general sentiment  
He hath a pleasing proof in that petition  
Which thou deliverd'st to him from the regiments.  
Add this too—I have letters that the Rhinegrave  
Hath changed his route, and travels by forced  
marches

To the Bohemian Forest. What this purports,  
Remains unknown; and, to confirm suspicion,  
This night a Swedish nobleman arrived here.

*Max.* I have thy word. Thou'lt not proceed  
to action

Before thou hast convinced me—me myself.

*Oct.* Is it possible? Still, after all thou know'st,  
Canst thou believe still in his innocence?

*Max.* [*with enthusiasm.*] Thy judgment may  
mistake; my heart can not.

[*Moderates his voice and manner*

These reasons might expound thy spirit or mine



But they expound not Friedland—I have faith :  
 For as he knits his fortunes to the stars,  
 Even so doth he resemble them in secret,  
 Wonderful, still inexplicable courses !  
 Trust me, they do him wrong. All will be solved  
 These smokes, at once, will kindle into flame—  
 The edges of this black and stormy cloud  
 Will brighten suddenly, and we shall view  
 The Unapproachable glide out in splendour.

*Oct.* I will await it.

SCENE II.—OCTAVIO and MAX as before. *To them the*  
*Valet of the Chamber.*

*Oct.* How now, then ?

*Val.* A dispatch is at the door.

*Oct.* So early ? From whom comes he then ?  
 Who is it ?

*Val.* That he refused to tell me.

*Oct.* Lead him in :

And hark you—let it not transpire.

*[Exit Valet—the Cornet steps in.]*

Ha ! Cornet—is it you ? and from Count Gallas ?  
 Give me your letters.

*Cor.* The Lieutenant-General

Trusted it not to letters.

*Oct.* And what is it ?

*Cor.* He bade me tell you—Dare I speak  
 openly here ?

*Oct.* My son knows all.

*Cor.* We have him.

*Oct.*

Whom?

*Cor.*

Sesina,

The old negotiator.

*Oct.* [*eagerly.*] And you have him?*Cor.* In the Bohemian Forest Captain Mohr-  
brandt

Found and secured him yester morning early:

He was proceeding then to Regensburg,

And on him were dispatches for the Swede.

*Oct.* And the dispatches——*Cor.*

The Lieutenant-General

Sent them that instant to Vienna, and

The prisoner with them.

*Oct.*

This is, indeed, a tidings!

That fellow is a precious casket to us,

Inclosing weighty things—Was much found on  
him?*Cor.* I think, six packets, with Count Tertsky's  
arms.*Oct.* None in the Duke's own hand?*Cor.*

Not that I know.

*Oct.* And old Sesina?*Cor.*

He was sorely frightened,

When it was told him he must to Vienna.

But the Count Altringer bade him take heart,

Would he but make a full and free confession.

*Oct.* Is Altringer then with your lord? I  
heard

That he lay sick at Linz.

*Cor.*

These three days past

He's with my master, the Lieutenant-General,  
At Frauenburg. Already have they sixty  
Small companies together, chosen men ;  
Respectfully they greet you with assurances,  
That they are only waiting your commands.

*Oct.* In a few days may great events take place.  
And when must you return ?

*Cor.* I wait your orders.

*Oct.* Remain till evening.

[*CORNET signifies his assent and obeisance, and is going*

No one saw you—ha ?

*Cor.* No living creature. Through the cloister  
wicket

The Capuchins, as usual, let me in.

*Oct.* Go, rest your limbs, and keep yourself  
concealed.

I hold it probable, that yet ere evening  
I shall dispatch you. The development  
Of this affair approaches : ere the day,  
That even now is dawning in the heaven,  
Ere this eventful day hath set, the lot  
That must decide our fortunes will be drawn.

[*Exit Cornet.*

SCENE III.—OCTAVIO, and MAX PICCOLOMINI.

*Oct.* Well—and what now, son ? All will soon  
be clear ;

For all, I'm certain, went through that Sesina

*Max.* [*who through the whole of the foregoing scene has been in a visible struggle of feelings, at length starts as one resolved.*] I will procure me light a shorter way. Farewell.

*Oct.* Where now?—Remain here.

*Max.* To the Duke.

*Oct.* [*alarmed.*] What——

*Max.* [*returning.*] If thou hast believed that I shall act

A part in this thy play——

Thou hast miscalculated on me grievously.

My way must be straight on. True with the tongue,

False with the heart—I may not, cannot be:

Nor can I suffer that a man should trust me—

As his friend trust me—and then lull my conscience

With such low pleas as these:—"I ask'd him not—

He did it all at his own hazard—and

My mouth has never lied to him."—No, no!

What a friend takes me for, that I must be:

—I'll to the Duke; ere yet this day is ended

Will I demand of him that he do save

His good name from the world, and with one stride

Break through and rend this fine-spun web of yours.

He can, he will;—I still am his believer.

Yet I'll not pledge myself, but that those letters

May furnish you, perchance, with proofs against him.

How far may not this Tertsy have proceeded—  
What may not he himself too have permitted  
Himself to do, to snare the enemy,  
The laws of war excusing? Nothing, save  
His own mouth shall convict him—nothing less!  
And face to face will I go question him.

*Oct.* Thou wilt?

*Max.* I will, as sure as this heart beats.

*Oct.* I have, indeed, miscalculated on thee.  
I calculated on a prudent son,  
Who would have bless'd the hand beneficent  
That plucked him back from the abyss—and lo!  
A fascinated being I discover,  
Whom his two eyes befool, whom passion wilders,  
Whom not the broadest light of noon can heal.  
Go, question him!—Be mad enough, I pray thee.  
The purpose of thy father, of thy Emperor,  
Go, give it up free booty:—Force me, drive me  
To an open breach before the time. And now,  
Now that a miracle of heaven had guarded  
My secret purpose even to this hour,  
And laid to sleep suspicion's piercing eyes,  
Let me have lived to see that mine own son,  
With frantic enterprise, annihilates  
My toilsome labours and state policy.

*Max.* Ay—this state policy! O how I curse it  
You will some time, with your state policy,  
Compel him to the measure: it may happen,

Because ye are *determined* that he is guilty,  
Guilty ye'll *make* him. All retreat cut off,  
You close up every outlet, hem him in  
Narrower and narrower, till at length ye *force*  
him—

Yes, *ye*—ye *force* him, in his desperation,  
To set fire to his prison. Father! Father!  
That never can end well—it cannot—will not!  
And let it be decided as it may,  
I see with boding heart the near approach  
Of an ill-starred, unblest catastrophe.  
For this great monarch-spirit, if he fall,  
Will drag a world into the ruin with him.  
And as a ship (that midway on the ocean  
Takes fire) at once, and with a thunder-burst  
Explodes, and with itself shoots out its crew  
In smoke and ruin betwixt sea and heaven;  
So will he, falling, draw down in his fall  
All us, who're fixed and mortised to his fortune.  
Deem of it what thou wilt; but pardon me,  
That I must bear me on in my own way.  
All must remain pure betwixt him and me;  
And, ere the day-light dawns, it must be known  
Which I must lose—my father, or my friend.

[*During his exit the curtain drops.*]

# ACT IV

**SCENE I**— *A Room fitted up for astrological labours, and provided with celestial charts, with globes, telescopes, quadrants, and other mathematical instruments.—Seven colossal figures, representing the planets, each with a transparent star of a different colour on its head, stand in a semicircle in the background, so that Mars and Saturn are nearest the eye.—The remainder of the Scene, and its disposition, is given in the Fourth Scene of the Second Act.—There must be a curtain over the figures, which may be dropped, and conceal them on occasions.*

[*In the Fifth Scene of this Act it must be dropped; but in the Seventh Scene, it must be again drawn up wholly or in part.*]

**WALLENSTEIN** *at a black table, on which a Speculum Astrologicum is described with chalk. SENI is taking observations through a window.*

*Wal.* All well—and now let it be ended, *Seni.*—  
Come,

The dawn commences, and Mars rules the hour.  
We must give o'er the operation. Come,  
We know enough.

*Seni.* Your Highness must permit me  
Just to contemplate Venus. She's now rising:  
Like as a sun, so shines she in the east.

*Wal.* She is at present in her perigee,  
And shoots down now her strongest influences.

[*Contemplating the figure on the table.*]

Auspicious aspect ! fateful in conjunction,  
 At length the mighty three corradiate;  
 And the two stars of blessing, Jupiter  
 And Venus, take between them the malignant  
 Shily-malicious Mars, and thus compel  
 Into *my* service that old mischief-founder;  
 For long he viewed me hostilely, and ever  
 With beam oblique, or perpendicular,  
 Now in the Quartile, now in the Secundan,  
 Shot his red lightnings at my stars, disturbing  
 Their blessed influences and sweet aspects.  
 Now they have conquered the old enemy,  
 And bring him in the heavens a prisoner to me.

*Seni.* [*who has come down from the window.*]  
 And in a corner house, your Highness—think of  
 that !

That makes each influence of double strength.

*Wal.* And sun and moon, too, in the Sextile  
 aspect,

The soft light with the veh'ment—so I love it.  
 Sol is the heart, Luna the head of heaven,  
 Bold be the plan, fiery the execution.

*Seni.* And both the mighty Lumina by no  
 Maleficus affronted. Lo ! Saturnus,  
 Innocuous, powerless, in cadente domo.

*Wal.* The empire of Saturnus is gone by :  
 Lord of the secret birth of things is he ;  
 Within the lap of earth, and in the depths  
 Of the imagination dominates ;  
 And his are all things that eschew the light.



The time is o'er of brooding and contrivance;  
 For Jupiter, the lustrous, lordeth now,  
 And the dark work, complete of preparation,  
 He draws by force into the realm of light.  
 Now must we hasten on to action, ere  
 The scheme, and most auspicious posture  
 Parts o'er my head, and takes once more its flight;  
 For the heavens journey still, and sojourn not.

*[There are knocks at the door.]*

There's some one knocking there. See who it is.

*Tertsy.* *[from without.]* Open, and let me in.

*Wal.* Ay—'tis Tertsy.

What is there of such urgency? We are busy.

*Ter.* *[from without.]* Lay all aside at present,

I entreat you.

It suffers no delaying.

*Wal.* Open, Seni!

*[While SENI opens the door for TERTSKY, WALLENSTEIN draws the curtain over the figures.]*

*Ter.* *[enters.]* Hast thou already heard it? He is taken.

Gallas has given him up to the Emperor.

*[SENI draws off the black table and exit.]*

SCENE II.—WALLENSTEIN, COUNT TERTSKY.

*Wal.* *[to Tertsy.]* Who has been taken?—Who is given up?

*Ter.* The man who knows our secrets, who knows every

Negotiation with the Swede and Saxon,  
Through whose hands all and every thing has  
passed—

*Wal.* [*drawing back.*] Nay, not Sesina?—Say,  
No! I entreat thee.

*Ter.* All on his road for Regensburg to the  
Swede

He was plunged down upon by Gallas' agent.  
Who had been long in ambush, lurking for him.  
There must have been found on him my whole  
packet

To Thurn, to Kinsky, to Oxenstiern, to Arnheim:  
All this is in their hands; they have now an  
insight

Into the whole—our measures, and our motives.

SCENE III.—*To them enters ILLO.*

*Illo.* [*to TERTSKY.*] Has he heard it?

*Ter.* He has heard it.

*Illo* [*to WALLENSTEIN.*] Thinkest thou still  
To make thy peace with the Emp'ror, to regain  
His confidence?—E'en were it now thy wish  
To abandon all thy plans, yet still they know  
What thou hast wished; then forwards thou must  
press!

Retreat is now no longer in thy power.

*Ter.* They have documents against us, and in  
hands,

Which show beyond all power of contradiction—

*Wal.* Of my handwriting—no iota. Thee  
I punish for thy lies.

*Illo.* And thou believest,  
That what this man, that what thy sister's husband,  
Did in thy name, will not stand on thy reck'ning?  
*His* word must pass for thy word with the Swede,  
And not with those that hate thee at Vienna.

*Ter.* In writing thou gav'st nothing—But be-  
think thee,

How far thou venturedst by word of mouth  
With this Sesina? And will he be silent?  
If he can save himself by yielding up  
Thy secret purposes, will he retain them?

*Illo.* Thyself dost not conceive it possible;  
And since they now have evidence authentic  
How far thou hast already gone, speak!—tell us,  
What art thou waiting for? thou canst no longer  
Keep thy command; and beyond hope of rescue  
Thou'rt lost, if thou resign'st it.

*Wal.* In the army  
Lies my security. The army will not  
Abandon me. Whatever they may know,  
The power is mine, and they must gulp it down—  
And substitute I caution for my fealty,  
They must be satisfied, at least appear so.

*Illo.* The army, Duke, is thine now—for this  
moment—  
'Tis thine: but think with terror on the slow,  
The quiet power of time. From open violence  
The attachment of thy soldiery secures thee

To-day—to-morrow; but grant'st thou them a  
respite,

Unheard, unseen, they'll undermine that love  
On which thou now dost feel so firm a footing;  
With wily theft will draw away from thee  
One after th' other——

*Wal.* 'Tis a cursed accident!

*Illo.* O, I will call it a most blessed one,  
If it work on thee as it ought to do,  
Hurry thee on to action—to decision.  
The Swedish General——

*Wal.* He's arrived! Know'st thou  
What his commission is——

*Illo.* To thee alone  
Will he entrust the purpose of his coming.

*Wal.* A cursed, cursed accident! Yes, yes,  
Sesina knows too much, and won't be silent.

*Ter.* He's a Bohemian fugitive and rebel,  
His neck is forfeit. Can he save himself  
At thy cost, think you he will scruple it?  
And if they put him to the torture, will he,  
Will he, that dastardling, have strength  
enough——

*Wal.* [*lost in thought.*] Their confidence is lost—  
irreparably!

And I may act what way I will, I shall  
Be and remain for ever in their thought  
A traitor to my country. How sincerely  
Soever I return back to my duty,  
It will no longer help me——

*Illo.*

Ruin thee,

That it will do! Not thy fidelity,

Thy weakness will be deemed the sole occasion—

*Wal.* [*pacing up and down in extreme agitation.*] What! I must realize it now in earnest,

Because I toyed too freely with the thought?

Accursed he who dallies with a devil!

And must I—I *must* realize it now—

Now, while I have the power, it *must* take place?

*Illo.* Now—now—ere they can ward and parry it!

*Wal.* [*looking at the paper of signatures.*] I have the Generals' word—a written promise!

Max Piccolomini stands not here—how's that?

*Ter.* It was—he fancied——

*Illo.*

Mere self-willedness.

There needed no such thing 'twixt him and you.

*Wal.* He is quite right—there needeth no such thing:

The regiments, too, deny to march for Flanders—

Have sent me in a paper of remonstrance,

And openly resist the Imperial orders.

The first step to revolt's already taken.

*Illo.* Believe me, thou wilt find it far more easy  
To lead them over to the enemy  
Than to the Spaniard.

*Wal.*

I will hear, however,

What the Swede has to say to me.

*Illo.* [*eagerly to TERTSKY.*] Go, call him!  
He stands without the door in waiting.

*Wal.*

Stay!

Stay yet a little. It hath taken me  
 All by surprise,—it came too quick upon me;  
 'Tis wholly novel, that an accident,  
 With its dark lordship, and blind agency,  
 Should force me on with it.

*Illo.*

First hear him only,

And after weigh it.

[*Exeunt TERTSKY and ILLO*]

## SCENE IV.—WALLENSTEIN.

*Wal.* [*in soliloquy.*] Is it possible?

Is't so? I *can* no longer what I *would*!  
 No longer draw back at my liking! I  
 Must *do* the deed, because I *thought* of it,  
 And told this heart here with a dream! *Because*  
 I did not scowl temptation from my presence,  
 Dallied with thoughts of possible fulfilment,  
 Commenced no movement, left all time uncertain,  
 And only kept the road, the access open!  
 By the great God of Heaven! it was not  
 My serious meaning, it was ne'er resolve.  
 I but amused myself with thinking of it.  
 The free-will tempted me, the power to do  
 Or not to do it.—Was it criminal  
 To make the fancy minister to hope,  
 To fill the air with pretty toys of air,  
 And clutch fantastic sceptres moving t'ward me?  
 Was not the will kept free? Beheld I not  
 The road of duty close beside me—but

One little step, and once more I was in it !  
 Where am I ? Whither have I been transported ?  
 No road, no track behind me, but a wall,  
 Impenetrable, insurmountable,  
 Rises obedient to the spells I muttered  
 And meant not—my own doings tower behind me.

*[Pauses, and remains in deep thought]*

A punishable man I seem, the guilt,  
 Try what I will, I cannot roll off from me ;  
 The equivocal demeanour of my life  
 Bears witness on my prosecutor's party ;  
 And even my purest acts from purest motives  
 Suspicion poisons with malicious gloss.  
 Were I that thing, for which I pass, that traitor,  
 A goodly outside I had sure reserved,  
 Had drawn the cov'rings thick and double round  
 me,

Been calm and chary of my utterance.  
 But being conscious of the innocence  
 Of my intent, my uncorrupted will,  
 I gave way to my humours, to my passion :  
 Bold were my words, because my deeds were *not*.  
 Now every planless measure, chance event,  
 The threat of rage, the vaunt of joy and triumph,  
 And all the May-games of a heart o'erflowing,  
 Will they connect, and weave them all together  
 Into one web of treason ; all will be plan,  
 My eye ne'er absent from the far-off mark,  
 Step tracing step, each step a politic progress ;  
 And out of all they'll fabricate a charge

So specious, that I must myself stand *dumb*.  
 I am caught in my own net, and only force,  
 Nought but a sudden *rent* can liberate me.

[*Pauses again*

How else! since that the heart's unbiased instinct  
 Impelled me to the daring deed, which now  
 Necessity, self-preservation, *orders*.  
 Stern is the on-look of Necessity,  
 Not without shudder many a human hand  
 Grasps the mysterious urn of destiny.  
 My deed was mine, remaining in my bosom,  
 Once suffered to escape from its safe corner  
 Within the heart, its nursery and birthplace,  
 Sent forth into the foreign, it belongs  
 For ever to those sly malicious powers  
 Whom never art of man conciliated.

[*Paces in agitation through the Chamber, then pauses,  
 and, after the pause, breaks out again into audible  
 soliloquy.*

What is thy enterprise? thy aim? thy object?  
 Hast honestly confessed it to thyself?  
 Power seated on a quiet throne thou'dst shake,  
 Power of an ancient consecrated throne,  
 Strong in possession, founded in old custom;  
 Power by a thousand tough and stringy roots  
 Fixed to the people's pious nursery-faith.  
 This, this will be no strife of strength with strength  
 That feared I not. I brave each combatant,  
 Whom I can look on, fixing eye to eye,  
 Who, full himself of courage, kindles courage



In me too. 'Tis a foe invisible,  
 The which I fear—a fearful enemy,  
 Which in the human heart opposes me,  
 By its coward fear alone made fearful to me.  
 Not that, which full of life, instinct with power,  
 Makes known its present being, that is not  
 The true, the perilously formidable.  
 O no! it is the common, the quite common,  
 The thing of an eternal yesterday,  
 What ever was, and evermore returns,  
 Sterling to-morrow, for to-day 'twas sterling!  
 For of the wholly common is man made,  
 And custom is his nurse! Woe then to them,  
 Who lay irreverent hands upon his old  
 House furniture, the dear inheritance  
 From his forefathers. For time consecrates;  
 And what is gray with age becomes religion.  
 Be in possession, and thou hast the right,  
 And sacred will the many guard it for thee!

[*To the Page who here enters.*

The Swedish officer?—Well, let him enter.

[*The Page exit, WALLENSTEIN fixes his eye in deep thought on the door.*

Yet is it pure—as yet!—the crime has come  
 Not o'er this threshold yet—so slender is  
 The boundary that divideth life's two paths.

SCENE V.—WALLENSTEIN and WRANGEL.

*Wal.* [*after having fixed a searching look on him.*] Your name is Wrangel?

*Wran.* Gustave Wrangel, General  
Of the Sudermanian Blues.

*Wal.* It was a Wrangel  
Who injured me materially at Stralsund,  
And by his brave resistance was the cause  
Of th' opposition which that seaport made.

*Wran.* It was the doing of the element  
With which you fought, my lord, and not my  
merit.

The Baltic Neptune did assert his freedom,  
The sea and land, it seemed, were not to serve  
One and the same.

*Wal.* [*makes a motion for him to take a seat,  
and seats himself.*] And where are your cre-  
dentials?

Come you provided with full powers, Sir General?

*Wran.* There are so many scruples yet to  
solve——

*Wal.* [*having read the credentials.*] An able  
letter!—Ay—he is a prudent,  
Intelligent master, whom you serve, Sir General!  
The Chancellor writes me, that he but fulfils  
His late departed Sovereign's own idea  
In helping me to the Bohemian crown.

*Wran.* He says the truth. Our great king  
now in heaven,  
Did ever deem most highly of your Grace's  
Preëminent sense and military genius;  
And always the commanding Intellect,  
He said, should have command, and be the king

*Wal.* Yes, he *might* say it safely.—General  
                     Wrangel,           *[Taking his hand affectionately.*  
 Come, fair and open—Trust me, I was always  
 A Swede at heart. Ey! that did you experience  
 Both in Silesia and at Nuremburg;  
 I had you often in my power, and let you  
 Always slip out by some back door or other.  
 'Tis this for which the Court can ne'er forgive me,  
 Which drives me to this present step: and since  
 Our interests so run in one direction,  
 E'en let us have a thorough confidence  
 Each in the other.

*Wran.*                      Confidence will come,  
 Has each but only first security.

*Wal.* The Chancellor still, I see, does not quite  
                     trust me;  
 And, I confess—the gain does not lie wholly  
 To my advantage.—Without doubt he thinks  
 If I can play false with the Emperor,  
 Who is my sovereign, I can do the like  
 With th' enemy, and that *the one* too were  
 Sooner to be forgiven me than the *other*.  
 Is not this your opinion too, Sir General?

*Wran.* I have here an office merely, no opinion.

*Wal.* The Emperor hath urged me to the  
                     uttermost.  
 I can no longer honourably serve him.  
 For my security, in self-defence,  
 I take this hard step, which my conscience blames.  
*Wran.* That I believe.   So far would no one go

Who was not forced to it. [After a pause.

What may have impelled  
Your princely Highness in this wise to act  
Toward your Sovereign Lord and Emperor,  
Beseems not us to expound or criticize.  
The Swede is fighting for his good old cause,  
With his good sword and conscience. This con-  
currence,

This opportunity, is in our favour,  
And all advantages in war are lawful.  
We take what offers without questioning;  
And if all have its due and just proportions——

Wal. Of what then are ye doubting? Of my  
will?

Or of my power? I pledge me to the Chancellor,  
Would he trust me with sixteen thousand men,  
That I would instantly go over to them  
With eighteen thousand of the Emperor's troops.

Wran. Your Grace is known to be a mighty  
war-chief.

To be a second Attila and Pyrrhus.  
'Tis talked of still with fresh astonishment,  
How some years past, beyond all human faith  
You called an army forth, like a creation;  
But yet——

Wal. But yet?

Wran. But still the Chancellor thinks,  
It might yet be an easier thing from nothing  
To call forth sixty thousand men of battle,  
Than to persuade one sixtieth part of them——

*Wal.* What now? Out with it, friend?

*Wran.* To break their oaths.

*Wal.* And he thinks *so*?—He judges like a Swede,

And like a Protestant. You Lutherans  
Fight for your Bible. You are int'rested  
About the cause; and with your *hearts* you follow  
Your banners.—Among *you*, whoe'er deserts  
To the enemy, hath broken covenant  
With two Lords at one time. We've no such fancies.

*Wran.* Great God in Heaven! Have then the  
people here

No house and home, no fireside, no altar?

*Wal.* I will explain that to you, how it stands—  
The Austrian *has* a country, ay, and loves it,  
And has good cause to love it—but this army,  
That calls itself th' Imperial, this that houses  
Here in Bohemia, this has none—no country;  
This is an outcast of all foreign lands,  
Unclaimed by town or tribe, to whom belongs  
Nothing, except the universal sun.

*Wran.* But then the nobles and the officers?  
Such a desertion, such a felony,  
It is without example, my Lord Duke,  
In the world's history.

*Wal.* They are all mine—  
Mine unconditionally, mine on all terms.  
Not me, your own eyes you must trust.

[*He gives him the paper containing the written oath.*  
*WRANGEL* reads it through, and having read it,  
*lays it on the table, remaining silent.*

So then?

Now comprehend you?

*Wran.*

Comprehend who can!

My Lord Duke; I will let the mask drop—yes!  
I've full powers for a final settlement.

The Rhinegrave stands but four days' march  
from here

With fifteen thousand men, and only waits  
For orders to proceed and join your army.

Those orders *I* give out, immediately  
We're compromised.

*Wal.*

What asks the Chancellor?

*Wran.* [*considerately.*] Twelve regiments,  
every man a Swede—my head

The warranty—and all might prove at last  
Only false play——

*Wal.* [*starting.*] Sir Swede!

*Wran.* [*calmly proceeding.*] Am therefore  
forced

I'll insist thereon, that he do formally,  
Irrevocably break with th' Emperor,  
Else not a Swede is trusted to Duke Friedland.

*Wal.* Come, brief and open! what is the  
demand?

*Wran.* That he forthwith disarm the Spanish  
regiments

Attached to th' Emperor, that he seize Prague,  
And to the Swedes give up that city, with  
The strong pass Egra.

*Wal.*

That is much indeed!

Prague!—Egra's granted—But—but Prague!—

'Twon't do.

I give you every security

Which you may ask of me in common reason—

But Prague—Bohemia—these, Sir General,

I can myself protect.

*Wran.*

We doubt it not.

But 'tis not the protection that is now

Our sole concern. We want security,

That we shall not expend our men and money

All to no purpose.

*Wal.*

'Tis but reasonable.

*Wran.* And till we are indemnified, so long

Stays Prague in pledge.

*Wal.*

Then trust you us so little?

*Wran.* [*rising.*] The Swede, if he would treat  
well with the German,

Must keep a sharp look out. We have been  
called

Over the Baltic, we have saved the empire

From ruin—with our best blood have we sealed

The liberty of faith, and gospel truth.

But now already is the benefaction

No longer felt, the load alone is felt.—

Ye look askance with evil eye upon us,

As foreigners, intruders in the empire,

And would fain send us, with some paltry sum

Of money, home again to our old forests.

No no! my Lord Duke! no!—it never was

For Judas' pay, for chinking gold and silver,

That we did leave our king by the great Stone.\*

No, not for gold and silver have there bled  
So many of our Swedish nobles—neither  
Will we, with empty laurels for our payment,  
Hoist sail for our own country. *Citizens*  
Will we remain upon the soil, the which  
Our monarch conquered for himself, and died.

*Wal.* Help to keep down the common enemy,  
And the fair border land must needs be yours.

*Wran.* But when the common enemy lies  
vanquished,  
Who knits together our new friendship then?  
We know, Duke Friedland! though perhaps the  
Swede

Ought not t'have known it, that you carry on  
Secret negotiations with the Saxons.

Who is our warranty, that *we* are not  
The sacrifices in those articles

Which 'tis thought needful to conceal from us?

*Wal.* [*rises.*] Think you of something better,  
Gustave Wrangel!

Of Prague no more.

*Wran.* Here my commission ends.

*Wal.* Surrender up to you my capital!  
Far liever would I face about, and step  
Back to my Emperor.

*Wran.* If time yet permits——

\* A great stone near Lützen, since called the Swede's Stone, the body of their great king having been found at the foot of it, after the battle in which he lost his life.



*Wal.* That lies with me, even now, at any hour.

*Wran.* Some days ago, perhaps. To day, no longer,

No longer since Sesina is a prisoner.

[WALLENSTEIN is struck, and silenced.]

My Lord Duke, hear me—We believe that you  
At present do mean honourably by us.

Since *yesterday* we're sure of that—and now

This paper warrants for the troops, there's  
nothing

Stands in the way of our full confidence.

Prague shall not part us. Hear! The Chan-  
cellor

Contents himself with Altstadt, to your Grace  
He gives up Ratschin and the narrow side.

But Egra above all must open to us,  
Ere we can think of any junction.

*Wal.* You,

You, therefore must I trust, and you not me?  
I will consider of your proposition.

*Wran.* I must entreat, that your consideration  
Occupy not too long a time. Already  
Has this negotiation, my Lord Duke,  
Crept on into the second year. If nothing  
Is settled this time, will the Chancellor  
Consider it as broken off for ever.

*Wal.* Ye press me hard. A measure such as  
this,  
Ought to be *thought of*.

*Wran.* Ay! but think of this too,

That sudden action only can procure it  
 Success—think first of this, your Highness.

[*Exit WRANGEL*]

SCENE VI.—WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY, and ILLO (*re-enter.*)

*Illo.* Is't all right?

*Ter.* Are you compromised?

*Illo.* This Swede

Went smiling from you. Yes! you're compromised.

*Wal.* As yet is nothing settled: and (well weighed)

I fee myself inclined to leave it so.

*Ter.* How? What is that?

*Wal.* Come on me what will come,  
 The doing evil to avoid an evil  
 Cannot be good!

*Ter.* Nay, but bethink you, Duke?

*Wal.* To live upon the mercy of these Swedes!  
 Of these proud-hearted Swedes, I could not bear it.

*Illo.* Goest thou as fugitive, as mendicant?  
 Bringest thou not more to them than thou receiv-  
 est?

SCENE VII.—*To these Enter the COUNTESS TERTSKY.*

*Wal.* Who sent for you? There is no business  
 here

*For women.*

*Coun.* I am come to bid you joy.

*Wal.* Use thy authority, Tertsy, bid her go.

*Coun.* Come I perhaps too early? I hope not.

*Wal.* Set not this tongue upon me, I entreat you.

You know it is the weapon that destroys me.

I am routed, if a woman but attack me.

I cannot traffic in the trade of words

With that unreasoning sex.

*Coun.* I had already

Given the Bohemians a king.

*Wal.* [*sarcastically.*] They have one,

In consequence, no doubt.

*Coun.* [*to the others.*] Ha! what new scruple?

*Ter.* The Duke will not.

*Coun.* He *will not* what he *must*!

*Illo.* It lies with you now. Try. For I am silenced

When folks begin to talk to me of conscience

And of fidelity.

*Coun.* How? then, when all

Lay in the far off distance, when the road

Stretched out before thine eyes interminably,

Then hadst thou courage and resolve; and now,

Now that the dream is being realized,

The purpose ripe, the issue ascertained,

Dost thou begin to play the dastard now?

Planned merely, 'tis a common felony;

Accomplished, an immortal undertaking:

And with success comes pardon hand in hand;

For all event is God's arbitrament.

*Servant* [*enters.*] The Colonel Piccolomini.

*Coun.* [*hastily.*] —Must wait.

*Wal.* I cannot see him now. Another time.

*Ser.* But for two minutes he entreats an audience.

Of the most urgent nature is his business.

*Wal.* Who knows what he may bring us? I will hear him.

*Coun.* (*laughs.*) Urgent for him, no doubt; but thou mayest wait.

*Wal.* What is it?

*Coun.* Thou shalt be informed hereafter.

First let the Swede and thee be compromised.

[*Exit Servant.*]

*Wal.* If there were yet a choice! if yet some milder

Way of escape were possible—I still

Will choose it, and avoid the last extreme.

*Coun.* Desir'st thou nothing further? Such a way

Lies still before thee. Send this Wrangel off.

Forget thou thy old hopes, cast far away

All thy past life; determine to commence

A new one. Virtue hath her heroes too,

As well as fame and fortune. To Vienna—

Hence—to the Emperor—kneel before the throne

Take a full coffer with thee—say aloud,

Thou didst but wish to prove thy fealty;

Thy whole intention but to dupe the Swede.

*Illo.* For that too 'tis too late. They know too much.

He would but bear his own head to the block

*Coun.* I fear not that. They have not evidence  
To attain him legally, and they avoid  
The avowal of an arbitrary power.  
They'll let the Duke resign without disturbance.  
I see how all will end. The King of Hungary  
Makes his appearance, and 'twill of itself  
Be understood, that then the Duke retires.  
There will not want a formal declaration.  
The young king will administer the oath  
To the whole army ; and so all returns  
To the old position. On some morrow morning  
The Duke departs ; and now 'tis stir and bustle  
Within his castles. He will hunt, and build,  
Superintend his horses' pedigrees ;  
Creates himself a court, gives golden keys,  
And introduceth strictest ceremony  
In fine proportions, and nice etiquette ;  
Keeps open table with high cheer ; in brief,  
Commenceth mighty king—in miniature.  
And while he prudently demeans himself,  
And gives himself no actual importance,  
He will be let appear whate'er he likes ;  
And who dares doubt, that Friedland will appear  
A mighty prince to his last dying hour ?  
Well now, what then ? Duke Friedland is as  
others

A fire-new noble, whom the war hath raised

To price and currency, a Jonah's gourd,  
An over-night creation of court-favour,  
Which with an undistinguishable ease  
Makes baron or makes prince.

*Wal.* [*in extreme agitation.*] Take her away.  
Let in the young Count Piccolomini.

*Conn.* Art thou in earnest? I entreat thee!

Canst thou

Consent to bear thyself to thy own grave,  
So ignominiously to be dried up?  
Thy life, that arrogated such a height  
To end in such a nothing! To be nothing,  
When one was always nothing, is an evil  
That asks no stretch of patience, a light evil,  
But to become a nothing, having been——

*Wal.* [*starts up in violent agitation.*] Show me  
a way out of this stifling crowd,

Ye powers of aidance! Show me such a way  
As I am capable of going.—I  
Am no tongue-hero, no fine virtue-prattler;  
I cannot warm by thinking; cannot say  
To the good luck that turns her back upon me,  
Magnanimously: "Go; I need thee not."  
Cease I to work, I am annihilated.  
Dangers nor sacrifices will I shun,  
If so I may avoid the last extreme;  
But ere I sink down into nothingness,  
Leave off so little, who began so great,  
Ere that the world confuses me with those  
Poor wretches, whom a day creates and crumbles,

This age and after-ages speak my name  
With hate and dread; and Friedland be redemp-  
tion

For each accursed deed !

*Coun.* What is there here, then,  
So against nature ? Help me to perceive it !  
O let not superstition's nightly goblins  
Subdue thy clear bright spirit ! Art thou bid  
To murder ?—with abhorred accursed poignard,  
To violate the breasts that nourished thee ?  
That *were* against our nature, that might aptly  
Make thy flesh shudder, and thy whole heart  
sicken ;—

Yet not a few, and for a meaner object,  
Have ventured even this, ay, and performed it.  
What is there in thy case so black and monstrous ?  
Thou art accused of treason—whether with  
Or without justice is not now the question—  
Thou art lost if thou dost not avail thee quickly  
Of the power which thou possessest—Friedland !

*Duke !*

Tell me, where lives that thing so meek and tame,  
That doth not all his living faculties  
Put forth in preservation of his life ?  
What deed so daring, which necessity  
And desperation will not sanctify ?

*Wal.* Once was this Ferdinand so gracious  
to me :

He loved me ; he esteemed me ; I was placed  
The nearest to his heart. Full many a time

We like familiar friends, both at one table,  
Have banqueted together. He and I—  
And the young kings themselves held me the  
basin

Wherewith to wash me—and is't come to this?

*Coun.* So faithfully preserv'st thou each small  
favour,

And hast no memory for contumelies?

Must I remind thee, how at Regensburg

This man repaid thy faithful services?

All ranks and all conditions in the empire

Thou hadst wronged, to make him great,—hadst  
loaded on thee,

On thee, the hate, the curse of the whole world.

No friend existed for thee in all Germany;

And why? because thou hadst existed only

For the Emperor. To the Emperor alone

Clung Friedland in that storm which gathered  
round him

At Regensburg in the Diet—and he dropped  
thee;

He let thee fall! He let thee fall a victim

To the Bavarian, to that insolent!

Deposed, stript bare of all thy dignity

And power, amid the taunting of thy foes,

Thou wert let drop into obscurity.—

Say not, the restoration of thy honour

Hath made atonement for that first injustice,

No honest good-will was it that replaced thee;

The law of hard necessity replaced thee,



Which they had fain opposed, but that they could not.

*Wal.* Not to their good wishes, that is certain,  
Nor yet to his affection I'm indebted  
For this high office ; and if I abuse it,  
I shall therein abuse no confidence.

*Coun.* Affection ! confidence !—They *needed*  
thee.

Necessity, impetuous remonstrant !  
Who not with empty names, or shows of proxy,  
Is served, who'll have the thing and not the  
symbol,  
Ever seeks out the greatest and the best,  
And at the rudder places *him*, e'en though  
She had been forced to take him from the rab-  
ble—

She, this necessity, it was that placed thee  
In this high office, it was she that gave thee  
Thy letters patent of inauguration.  
For, to the uttermost moment that they can,  
This race still help themselves at cheapest rate  
With slavish souls, with puppets ! At the approach  
Of extreme peril, when a hollow image  
Is found a hollow image and no more,  
Then falls the power into the mighty hands  
Of nature, of the spirit giant-born,  
Who listens only to himself, knows nothing  
Of stipulations, duties, reverences,  
And, like the emancipated force of fire,  
Unmastered scorches, ere it reaches *them*,

Their fine-spun webs, their artificial policy.

*Wal.* 'Tis true! they saw me always as I am—  
Always! I did not cheat them in the bargain.  
I never held it worth my pains to hide  
The bold all-grasping habit of my soul.

*Coun.* Nay rather—thou hast ever shown  
thyself

A formidable man, without restraint;  
Hast exercised the full prerogatives  
Of thy impetuous nature, which had been  
Once granted to thee. Therefore, Duke, not  
thou,

Who hast still remained consistent with thyself,  
But *they* are in the wrong who fearing thee,  
Entrusted such a power in hands they feared.  
For, by the laws of spirit, in the right  
Is every individual character  
That acts in strict consistence with itself.  
Self-contradiction is the only wrong.  
Wert thou another being, then, when thou  
Eight years ago pursuedst thy march with fire  
And sword, and desolation, through the Circles  
Of Germany, the universal scourge,  
Didst mock all ordinances of the empire,  
The fearful rights of strength alone exertedst,  
Trampledst to earth each rank, each magistracy,  
All to extend thy Sultan's domination?  
Then was the time to break thee in, to curb  
Thy haughty will, to teach thee ordinance.  
But no! the Emperor felt no touch of conscience

What served him pleased him, and without a  
murmur

He stamped his broad seal on these lawless deeds.  
What at that time was right, because thou didst it  
*For him*, to-day is all at once become  
Opprobrious, foul, because it is directed  
*Against him*.—O most flimsy superstition !

*Wal. [rising.]* I never saw it in this light  
before.

'Tis even so. The Emperor perpetrated  
Deeds through my arm, deeds most unorderly.  
And even this prince's mantle, which I wear,  
I owe to what were services to him,  
But most high misdemeanours 'gainst the empire.

*Coun.* Then betwixt thee and him (confess it,  
Friedland !)

The point can be no more of right and duty,  
Only of power and opportunity.  
That opportunity, lo ! it comes yonder,  
Approaching with swift steeds ; then with a swing  
Throw thyself up into the chariot seat,  
Seize with firm hand the reins, ere thy opponent  
Anticipate thee, and himself make conquest  
Of the now empty seat. The moment comes—  
It is already here, when thou must write  
The absolute total of thy life's vast sum.  
The constellations stand victorious o'er thee.  
The planets shoot good fortune in fair junctions,  
And tell thee, "Now's the time !" The starry  
courses

Hast thou thy life-long measured to no purpose?  
The quadrant and the circle, were they playthings?

[*Pointing to the different objects in the room.*

The zodiacs, the rolling orbs, of heaven,  
Hast pictured on these walls, and all around thee  
In dumb, foreboding symbols hast thou placed  
These seven presiding Lords of Destiny—  
For toys? Is all this preparation nothing?  
Is there no marrow in this hollow art,  
That even to thyself it doth avail  
Nothing, and has no influence over thee  
In the great moment of decision?—

*Wal.* [*during this last speech walks up and down with inward struggles, labouring with passions; stops suddenly, stands still, then interrupting the Countess.*] Send Wrangel to me—I will  
instantly

Dispatch three couriers——

*Illo.* [*hurrying out.*] God in heaven be praised!

*Wal.* It is his evil genius and mine.

Our evil genius! It chastises him  
Through me, the instrument of his ambition;  
And I expect no less, than that Revenge  
E'en now is whetting for *my* breast the poignard.  
Who sows the serpent's teeth, let him not hope  
To reap a joyous harvest. Every crime  
Has, in the moment of its perpetration,  
Its own avenging angel—dark Misgiving,  
An ominous Sinking at the inmost heart.  
He can no longer trust me—Then no longer

Can I retreat—so come that which must come.—  
 Still destiny preserves its due relations,  
 The heart within us is its absolute  
 Vicegerent. [To TERTSKY.

Go, conduct you Gustave Wrangel  
 To my state-cabinet.—Myself will speak to  
 The couriers.—And dispatch immediately  
 A servant for Octavio Piccolomini.

*[To the COUNTESS, who cannot conceal her triumph.*  
 No exultation!—woman, triumph not!  
 For jealous are the Powers of Destiny.  
 Joy premature, and shouts ere victory,  
 Inroach upon their rights and privileges.  
 We sow the seed, and they the growth determine.  
*[While he is making his exit the curtain drops.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*As in the preceding Act.*

WALLENSTEIN, OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI.

*Wal. [coming forward in conversation.]* He  
 sends me word from Linz, that he lies sick;  
 But I have sure intelligence, that he  
 Secretes himself at Frauenberg with Gallas.  
 Secure them both, and send them to me hither.

Remember, thou tak'st on thee the command  
 Of those same Spanish regiments,—constantly  
 Make preparation, and be never ready;  
 And if they urge thee to draw out against me,  
 Still answer yes, and stand as thou wert fettered.  
 I know, that it is doing thee a service  
 To keep thee out of action in this business.  
 Thou lov'st to linger on in fair appearances;  
 Steps of extremity are not thy province,  
 Therefore have I sought out this part for thee.  
 Thou wilt this time be of most service to me  
 By thy inertness. The mean time, if fortune  
 Declare itself on my side, thou wilt know  
 What is to do.

*Enter MAX PICCOLOMINI.*

*Now go, Octavio.*

This night must thou be off, take my own horses:  
 Him here I keep with me—make short farewell—  
 Trust me, I think we shall all meet again  
 In joy and thriving fortunes.

*Oct. [to his son.]*

I shall see you

Yet ere I go.

SCENE II.—WALLENSTEIN, MAX PICCOLOMINI.

*Max. [advances to him.] My General!*

*Wal.*

That am I no longer, if

Thou styl'st thyself the Emperor's officer.

*Max.* Then thou wilt leave the army, General?

*Wal.* I have renounced the service of the Emperor.

*Max.* And thou wilt leave the army?

*Wal.* Rather hope I  
To bind it nearer still and faster to me.

*[He seats himself.]*

Yes, Max, I have delayed to open it to thee,  
Even till the hour of acting 'gins to strike.  
Youth's fortunate feeling doth seize easily  
The absolute right, yea, and a joy it is  
To exercise the single apprehension  
Where the sums square in proof;  
But where it happens, that of two sure evils  
One must be taken, where the heart not wholly  
Brings itself back from out the strife of duties,  
There 'tis a blessing to have no election,  
And blank necessity is grace and favour.

—This is now present: do not look behind  
thee,—

It can no more avail thee. Look thou forwards;

Think not! judge not! prepare thyself to act!  
The Court—it hath determined on my ruin,  
Therefore I will to be beforehand with them.  
We'll join the Swedes—right gallant fellows are  
they,

And our good friends.

*[He stops himself, expecting PICCOLOMINI'S answer.]*

I have ta'en thee by surprise. Answer me not.  
I grant thee time to recollect thyself.

*[He rises, and retires at the back of the stage. MAX remains for a long time motionless, in a trance of excessive anguish. At his first motion WALLENSTEIN returns, and places himself before him.]*

**Max.** My General, this day thou makest me  
Of age to speak in my own right and person,  
For till this day I have been spared the trouble  
To find out my own road. Thee have I followed  
With most implicit unconditional faith,  
Sure of the right path if I followed thee.  
To-day, for the first time, dost thou refer  
Me to myself, and forcest me to make  
Election between thee and my own heart.

**Wal.** Soft cradled thee thy Fortune till to-day:  
Thy duties thou couldst exercise in sport,  
Indulge all lovely instincts, act for ever  
With undivided heart. It can remain  
No longer thus. Like enemies, the roads  
Start from each other. Duties strive with duties.  
Thou must needs choose thy party in the war  
Which is now kindling 'twixt thy friend and him  
Who is thy Emperor.

**Max.** War! is that the name?  
War is as frightful as heaven's pestilence.  
Yet it is good, is it heaven's will as that is.  
Is that a good war, which against the Emperor  
Thou wagest with the Emperor's own army?  
O God of heaven! what a change is this.



Beseems it me to offer such persuasion  
 To thee, who like the fixt star of the pole,  
 Wert all I gazed at on life's trackless ocean?  
 O! what a rent thou makest in my heart!  
 The ingrained instinct of old reverence,  
 The holy habit of obediency,  
 Must I pluck live asunder from thy name?  
 Nay, do not turn thy countenance upon me—  
 It always was as a god looking at me!  
 Duke Wallenstein, its power is not departed:  
 The senses still are in thy bonds, although,  
 Bleeding, the soul hath freed itself.

*Wal.*

*Max, hear me.*

*Max.* O! do it not, I pray thee, do it not!  
 There is a pure and noble soul within thee,  
 Knows not of this unblest, unlucky doing.  
 Thy will is chaste, it is thy fancy only  
 Which hath polluted thee—and innocence,  
 It will not let itself be driven away  
 From that world-awing aspect. Thou wilt not,  
 Thou canst not, end in this. It would reduce  
 All human creatures to disloyalty  
 Against the nobleness of their own nature.  
 'Twill justify the vulgar misbelief,  
 Which holdeth nothing noble in free will,  
 And trusts itself to impotence alone  
 Made powerful only in an unknown power.

*Wal.* The world will judge me sternly, I expect it.

Already have I said to my own self

All thou canst say to me. Who but avoids  
Th' extreme,—can he by going round avoid it?  
But here there is no choice. Yes—I must use  
Or suffer violence—so stands the case,  
There remains nothing possible but that.

Max. O that is never possible for thee!  
'Tis the last desperate resource of those  
Cheap souls, to whom their honour, their good  
name

Is their poor *saving*, their last worthless *keep*,  
Which having staked and lost, they stake them-  
selves

In the mad rage of gaming. Thou art rich,  
And glorious; with an unpolluted heart  
Thou canst make conquest of whate'er seems  
highest;

But he, who once hath acted infamy,  
Does nothing more in this world.

Wal. [*grasps his hand.*] Calmly, Max!  
Much that is great and excellent will we  
Perform together yet. And if we only  
Stand on the height with dignity, 'tis soon  
Forgotten, Max, by what road we ascended.  
Believe me, many a crown shines spotless now,  
That yet was deeply sullied in the winning.  
To the evil spirit doth the earth belong,  
Not to the good. All, that the powers divine  
Send from above, are universal blessings:  
Their light rejoices us, their air refreshes,  
But never yet was man enriched by them:

In their eternal realm no *property*  
 Is to be struggled for—all there is general.  
 The jewel, the all-valued gold we win  
 From the deceiving Powers, depraved in nature,  
 That dwell beneath the day and blessed sun-light :  
 Not without sacrifices are they rendered  
 Propitious, and there lives no soul on earth  
 That e'er retired unsullied from their service.

*Max.* Whate'er is human, to the human being  
 Do I allow—and to the vehement  
 And striving spirit readily I pardon  
 Th' excess of action ; but to thee, my General !  
 Above *all* others make I large concession.  
 For thou must move a world, and be the master—  
 He kills thee, who condemns thee to inaction.  
 So be it then ! maintain thee in thy post  
 By violence. Resist the Emperor,  
 And if it must be, force with force repel :  
 I will not praise it, yet I can forgive it.  
 But not—not to the *traitor*—yes !—the word  
 Is spoken out——

Not to the traitor can I yield a pardon.  
 That is no mere excess ! that is no error  
 Of human nature—that is wholly different ;  
 O that is black, black as the pit of hell !

[WALLENSTEIN *betrays a sudden agitation.*

'Thou canst not hear it *named*, and wilt thou *do it* ?  
 O turn back to thy duty. That thou canst,  
 I hold it certain. Send me to Vienna.  
 I'll make thy peace for thee with th' Emperor.

He knows thee not. But I do know thee. He  
 Shall see thee, Duke! with my unclouded eye,  
 And I bring back his confidence to thee.

*Wal.* It is too late. Thou know'st not what  
 has happened.

*Max.* Were it too late, and were things gone  
 so far,

That a crime only could prevent thy fall,  
 Then—fall! fall honourably, even as thou stood'st,  
 Lose the command. Go from the stage of war.  
 Thou canst with splendour do it—do it too  
 With innocence. Thou hast lived much for others,  
 At length live thou for thy own self. I follow thee.  
 My destiny I never part from thine.

*Wal.* It is too late! Even now, while thou art  
 losing

Thy words, one after the other are the mile-stones  
 Left fast behind by my post couriers,  
 Who bear the order on to Prague and Egra.

[*MAX stands as convulsed, with a gesture and countenance  
 expressing the most intense anguish.*]

Yield thyself to it. We act as we are forced.

I cannot give assent to my own shame

And ruin. Thou—no—*thou* canst not forsake me

So let us do, what must be done, with dignity,

With a firm step. What am I doing worse

Than did famed Cæsar at the Rubicon,

When he the legions led against his country,

The which his country had delivered to him?

Had he thrown down the sword, he had been lost.

As I were, if I but disarmed myself.  
I trace out something in me of his spirit.  
Give me his luck, *that other thing* I'll bear.

[MAX quits him abruptly. WALLENSTEIN, startled and overpowered, continues looking after him, and is still in this posture when TERTSKY enters.]

SCENE III.—WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY.

*Ter.* Max Piccolomini just left you?

*Wal.* Where is Wrangel?

*Ter.* He is already gone.

*Wal.* In such a hurry?

*Ter.* It is as if the earth had swallowed him.  
He had scarce left thee, when I went to seek him.  
I wished some words with him—but he was gone.  
How, when, and where, could no one tell me. Nay  
I half believe it was the devil himself;  
A human creature could not so at once  
Have vanished.

*Illo.* [*enters.*] Is it true that thou wilt send  
Octavio?

*Ter.* How, Octavio! Whither send him!

*Wal.* He goes to Frauenberg, and will lead  
hither

The Spanish and Italian regiments.

*Illo.* No!

Nay, Heaven forbid!

*Wal.* And why should Heaven forbid?

*Illo.* Him!—that deceiver! Would'st thou trust  
to him

He knows thee not. But I do know thee. He  
Shall see thee, Duke! with my unclouded eye,  
And I bring back his confidence to thee.

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Yield thyself to it. We act as we are forced.  
I cannot give assent to my own shame  
And ruin. Thou—no—*thou* canst not forsake me  
So let us do, what must be done, with dignity,  
With a firm step. What am I doing worse  
Than did famed Cæsar at the Rubicon,  
When he the legions led against his country,  
The which his country had delivered to him?  
Had he thrown down the sword, he had been lost.

As I were, if I but disarmed myself.  
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Nay, Heaven forbid!

*Wal.* And why should Heaven forbid?

*Illo.* Hjm!—that deceiver! Would'st thou trust  
to him

The soldiery? Him wilt thou let slip from thee,  
Now, in the very instant that decides us——

*Ter.* Thou wilt not do this!—No! I pray thee,  
no!

*Wal.* Ye are whimsical.

*Illo.* O but for this time, Duke  
Yield to our warning! Let him not depart.

*Wal.* And why should I not trust him only this  
time,  
Who have always trusted him? What, then, has  
happened,

That I should lose my good opinion of him?  
In complaisance to your whims, not my own;  
I must, forsooth, give up a rooted judgment.  
Think not I am a woman. Having trusted him  
E'en till to-day, to-day too will I trust him.

*Ter.* Must it be he—he only! Send another

*Wal.* It must be he, whom I myself have  
chosen;

He is well fitted for the business. Therefore  
I gave it him.

*Illo.* Because he's an Italian—  
Therefore is he well fitted for the business.

*Wal.* I know you love them not—nor sire nor  
son—

Because that I esteem them, love them—visibly  
Esteem them, love them more than you and  
others,

E'en as they merit. Therefore are they eye-  
blights,



Thorns in your foot-path. But your jealousies,  
In what affect they me or my concerns?

Are they the worse to me because you hate them  
Love or hate one another as you will,  
I leave to each man his own moods and likings;  
Yet know the worth of each of you to me.

*Illo.* Von Questenberg, while he was here, was  
always

Lurking about with this Octavio.

*Wal.* It happened with my knowledge and  
permission.

*Illo.* I know that secret messengers came to  
him

From Galas——

*Wal.* That's not true.

*Illo.* O thou art blind

With thy deep-seeing eyes.

*Wal.* Thou wilt not shake

My faith for me—my faith, which founds itself  
On the profoundest science. If 'tis false,  
Then the whole science of the stars is false.  
For know, I have a pledge from fate itself,  
That he is the most faithful of my friends.

*Illo.* Hast thou a pledge, that this pledge is  
not false?

*Wal.* There exist moments in the life of man  
When he is nearer the great Soul of the world  
Than is man's custom, and possesses freely  
The power of questioning his destiny:  
And such a moment 'twas, when in the night

Before the action in the plains of Lützen,  
Leaning against a tree, thoughts crowding thoughts,  
I looked out far upon the ominous plain.  
My whole life, past and future in this moment  
Before my mind's eye glided, in procession,  
And to the destiny of the next morning  
The spirit, filled with anxious presentiment,  
Did knit the most removed futurity.  
Then said I also to myself, "So many  
Dost thou command. They follow all thy stars  
And as on some great number set their All  
Upon thy single head, and only man  
The vessel of thy fortune. Yet a day  
Will come, when destiny shall once more scatter  
All these in many a several direction:  
Few be they who will stand out faithful to thee."  
I yearned to know which one was faithfullest  
Of all, this camp included. Great Destiny,  
Give me a sign! And he shall be the man,  
Who, on the approaching morning, comes the first  
To meet me with a token of his love:  
And thinking this, I fell into a slumber.  
Then midmost in the battle was I led  
In spirit. Great the pressure and the tumult!  
Then was my horse killed under me: I sank:  
And over me away all unconcernedly,  
Drove horse and rider—and thus trod to pieces  
I lay, and panted like a dying man.  
Then seized me suddenly a saviour arm;  
It was Octavio's—I awoke at once,

'Twas broad day, and *Octavio* stood before me.  
 "My brother," said he, "do not ride to-day  
 The dapple, as you're wont; but mount the horse  
 Which I have chosen for thee. Do it, brother!  
 In love to me. A strong dream warned me so."  
 It was the swiftness of this horse that snatched me  
 From the hot pursuit of *Bannier's* dragoons.  
 My cousin rode the dapple on that day,  
 And never more saw I or horse or rider.

*Illo.* That was a chance.

*Wal.* [*significantly.*] There's no such thing as  
 chance.

In brief, 'tis signed and sealed that this *Octavio*  
 Is my good angel—and now no word more.

[*He is retiring.*]

*Ter.* This is my comfort—*Max* remains our  
 hostage.

*Illo.* And he shall never stir from here alive.

*Wal.* [*stops and turns himself round.*] Are ye  
 not like the women, who for ever

Only recur to their first word, although  
 One had been talking reason by the hour?  
 Know, that the human being's thoughts and deeds  
 Are not, like ocean billows, blindly moved.  
 The inner world, his microcosmus, is  
 The deep shaft, out of which they spring eternally.  
 They grow by certain laws, like the tree's fruit—  
 No juggling chance can metamorphose them.  
 Have I the human *kernel* first examined?  
 Then I know, too, the future will and action.

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber in PICCOLOMINI'S Dwelling-house*  
OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, ISOLANI (*entering*).

*Iso.* Here am I—Well! who comes yet of the others?

*Oct.* [*with an air of mystery.*] But, first, a word with you, Count Isolani.

*Iso.* [*with the same air of mystery.*] Will it explode, ha?—Is the Duke about  
To make th' attempt? In me, friend, you may place

Full confidence.—Nay, put me to the proof.

*Oct.* That may happen.

*Iso.* Noble brother, I am  
Not one of those men who in words are valiant,  
And when it comes to action skulk away—  
The Duke has acted towards me as a friend.  
God knows it is so; and I owe him all——  
He may rely on my fidelity.

*Oct.* That will be seen hereafter.

*Iso.* Be on your guard,  
All think not as I think; and there are many  
Who still hold with the Court—yes, and they say  
That those stol'n signatures bind them to nothing.

*Oct.* I am rejoiced to hear it.

*Iso.* You rejoice!

*Oct.* That the Emperor has yet such gallant  
servants,  
And loving friends.

*Iso.* Nay, jeer not, I entreat you.  
They are no such worthless fellows, I assure you.

*Oct.* I am assured already. God forbid  
That I should jest!—In very serious earnest  
I am rejoiced to see an honest cause  
So strong.

*Iso.* The devil!—what!—why, what means  
this?  
Are you not, then——For what, then, am I here?

*Oct.* That you may make full declaration,  
whether  
You will be called the friend or enemy  
Of th' Emperor.

*Iso.* [*with an air of defiance.*] That declara-  
tion, friend,  
I'll make to him in whom a right is placed  
To put that question to me.

*Oct.* Whether, Count,  
That right is mine, this paper may instruct you.

*Iso.* [*stammering.*] Why,—why—what! This  
is the Emperor's hand and seal!

[*Reads*

“Whereas the officers collectively  
Throughout our army will obey the orders  
Of the Lieutenant-General Piccolomini.  
As from ourselves.”——*Hem!*—Yes! so!—Yes!  
yes!—

I—I give you joy, Lieutenant-General!

*Oct.* And you submit you to the order?

*Iso.*

I——

But you have taken me so by surprise—  
Time for reflection one *must* have——

*Oct.* Two minutes.

*Iso.* My God! But then the case is——

*Oct.* Plain and simple.

You must declare you, whether you determine  
To act a treason gainst your Lord and Sovereign,  
Or whether you will serve him faithfully.

*Iso.* Treason!—My God!—But who talks then  
of treason?

*Oct.* That is the case. The Prince-duke is a  
traitor——

Means to lead over to the enemy

The Emperor's army.—Now, Count!—brief and  
full——

Say, will you break your oath to th' Emperor?

Sell yourself to the enemy?—Say, will you?

*Iso.* What mean you? I—I break my oath,  
d'ye say,

To his Imperial Majesty?

Did I say so?—When, when have I said that?

*Oct.* You have not said it yet—not yet. This  
instant

I wait to hear, Count, whether you *will* say it.

*Iso.* Ay! that delights me now, that you your-  
self

Bear witness for me that I never said so.

*Oct.* And you renounce the Duke then?

*Iso.* If he's planning

Treason—why, treason breaks all bonds asunder.

*Oct.* And are determined, too, to fight against  
him? .

*Iso.* He has done me service—but if he's a  
villain,

Perdition seize him!—All scores are rubbed off.

*Oct.* I am rejoiced that you're so well dis-  
posed.

This night break off in th' utmost secrecy  
With all the light-armed troops—it must appear  
As came the order from the Duke himself.  
At Frauenberg's the place of rendezvous ;  
There will Count Gallas give your further orders.

*Iso.* It shall be done. But you'll remember me  
With th' Emperor—how well disposed you found  
me.

*Oct.* I will not fail to mention it honourably.

[*Exit ISOLANI. A Servant enters.*]

What, Colonel Butler!—Show him up.

*Iso.* [*returning.*] Forgive me too my bearish  
ways, old father ! [great  
Lord God, how should I know, then, what a  
Person I had before me.

*Oct.* . No excuses !

*Iso.* I am a merry lad, and if at time  
A rash word might escape me 'gainst the Court  
Amidst my wine—You know no harm was  
meant. [Exit

*Oct.* You need not be uneasy on that score.  
That has succeeded. Fortune favour us  
With all the others only but as much !

## SCENE V.—OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, BUTLER.

*But.* At your command, Lieutenant-General.

*Oct.* Welcome, as honoured friend and visitor.

*But.* You do me too much honour.

*Oct.* [*after both have seated themselves.*] You have not

Returned the advances which I made you yesterday—

Misunderstood them, as mere empty forms.

That wish proceeded from my heart—I was

In earnest with you—for 'tis now a time

In which the honest should unite most closely.

*But.* 'Tis only the like-minded can unite.

*Oct.* True! and I name all honest men like-minded.

I never charge a man but with those acts

To which his character deliberately

Impels him; for alas! the violence

Of blind misunderstandings often thrusts

The very best of us from the right track.

You came through Frauenberg. Did the Count  
Gallas

Say nothing to you? Tell me. He's my friend

*But.* His words were lost on me.

*Oct.* It grieves me sorely,

To hear it: for his counsel was most wise.

I had myself the like to offer.

*But.*

Spare



Yourself the trouble—me th' embarrassment,  
To have deserved so ill your good opinion.

*Oct.* The time is precious—let us talk openly.  
You know how matters stand here. Wallenstein  
Meditates treason—I can tell you further—  
He has committed treason; but few hours  
Have past, since he a covenant concluded  
With th' enemy. The messengers are now  
Fall on their way to Egra and to Prague.  
To-morrow he intends to lead us over  
To th' enemy. But he deceives himself;  
For prudence wakes—the Emperor has still  
Many and faithful friends here, and they stand  
In closest union, mighty though unseen.  
This manifesto sentences the Duke—  
Recalls the obedience of the army from him,  
And summons all the loyal, all the honest,  
To join and recognize in me their leader.  
Choose—will you share with us an honest cause?  
Or with the evil share an evil lot.

*But.* [*rises.*] His lot is mine.

*Oct.* Is that your last resolve?

*But.* It is.

*Oct.* Nay, but bethink you, Colonel Butler!  
As yet you have time. Within my faithful breast  
That rashly uttered word remains interred.  
Recall it, Butler! choose a better party:  
You have not chosen the right one.

*But.* [*going.*] Any other  
Commands for me, Lieutenant-General?

*Oct.* See your white hairs! Recall that word!

*But.* Farewell!

*Oct.* What would you draw this good and  
gallant sword

In such a cause? Into a curse would you  
Transform the gratitude which you have earned  
By forty years' fidelity from Austria?

*But.* [*laughing with bitterness.*] Gratitude from  
the House of Austria. [*He is going.*]

*Oct.* [*permits him to go as far as the door, then  
calls after him.*] Butler!

*But.* What wish you?

*Oct.* How was't with the Count?

*But.* Count? what?

*Oct.* [*coldly.*] The title that you wished I mean.

*But.* [*starts in sudden passion.*] Hell and  
damnation!

*Oct.* [*coldly.*] You petitioned for it—

And your petition was repelled—Was it so?

*But.* Your insolent scoff shall not go by un-  
punished.

Draw!

*Oct.* Nay! your sword to 'ts sheath! and tell  
me calmly,

How all that happened. I will not refuse you  
Your satisfaction afterwards.—Calmly, Butler!

*But.* Be the whole world acquainted with the  
weakness

For which I never can forgive myself.

*Lieutenant-General.* Yes—I have ambition.

Ne'er was I able to endure contempt.  
It stung me to the quick, that birth and title  
Should have more weight than merit has in th'  
army.

I would fain not be meaner than my equal,  
So in an evil hour I let myself  
Be tempted to that measure—It was folly !  
But yet so hard a penance it deserved not.  
It might have been refused ; but wherefore barb  
And venom the refusal with contempt ?  
Why dash to earth and crush with heaviest

SCENE II

The gray-haired man, the faithful veteran ?  
Why to the baseness of his parentage  
Refer him with such cruel roughness, only  
Because he had a weak hour and forgot himself  
But nature gives a sting e'en to the worm  
Which wanton power treads on in sport and in-  
sult.

*Oct.* You must have been calumniated. Guess

you

The enemy, who did you this ill service ?

*But.* Be't who it will—a most low-hearted  
scoundrel.

Some vile court-minion must it be, some Spaniard,  
Some young squire of some ancient family,  
In whose light I may stand, some envious knave,  
Stung to his soul by my fair self-earned honours !

*Oct.* But tell me ! Did the Duke approve that  
measure ?

*But.* Himself impelled me to it, used his interest

In my behalf with all the warmth of friendship.

*Oct.* Ay? Are you sure of that?

*But.* I read the letter.

*Oct.* And so did I—but the contents were different. [BUTLER is suddenly struck.

By chance I'm in possession of that letter—

Can leave it to your own eyes to convince you.

[He gives him the letter.

*But.* Ha! what is this?

*Oct.* I fear me, Colonel Butler,  
An infamous game have they been playing with you.

The Duke, you say, impelled you to this measure?

Now, in this letter talks he in contempt

Concerning you, counsels the Minister

To give sound chastisement to your conceit,

For so he calls it.

[BUTLER reads through the letter, his knees tremble, he seizes a chair, and sinks down in it.

You have no enemy, no persecutor;

There's no one wishes ill to you. Ascribe

The insult you received to the Duke only.

His aim is clear and palpable. He wished

To tear you from your Emperor—he hoped

To gain from your revenge what he well knew

(What your long-tried fidelity convinced him)

He ne'er could dare expect from your calm reason.

A blind tool would he make you, in contempt

Use you, as means of most abandoned ends.  
He has gained his point. Too well has he succeeded

In luring you away from that good path  
On which you had been journeying forty years!

*But.* [*his voice trembling.*] Can e'er the Emperor's Majesty forgive me?

*Oct.* More than forgive you. He would fain compensate

For that affront, and most unmerited grievance  
Sustained by a deserving, gallant veteran.

From his free impulse he confirms the present,  
Which the Duke made you for a wicked purpose.

The regiment, which you now command, is yours.

[*BUTLER attempts to rise, sinks down again. He labours inwardly with violent emotions; tries to speak, and cannot. At length he takes his sword from the belt, and offers it to PICCOLOMINI.*

*Oct.* What wish you? Recollect yourself, friend.

*But.* Take it.

*Oct.* But to what purpose? Calm yourself.

*But.* O take it!

I am no longer worthy of this sword.

*Oct.* Receive it then anew from my hands—  
and

Wear it with honour for the right cause ever.

*But.* — Perjure myself to such a gracious  
Sovereign!

*Oct.* You'll make amends. Quick! break off from the Duke!

*But.* Break off from him!

*Oct.* What now? Bethink thyself.

*But.* [no longer governing his emotion.] Only break off from him?—He dies! he dies!

*Oct.* Come after me to Frauenberg, where now All who are loyal are assembling under Counts Altringer and Gallas. Many others I've brought to a remembrance of their duty. This night be sure, that you escape from Pilsen.

*But.* [BUTLER strides up and down in excessive agitation, then steps up to OCT. with resolved countenance.] Count Piccolomini! Dare that man speak

Of honour to you, who once broke his troth.

*Oct.* He who repents so deeply of it, dares.

*But.* Then leave me here, upon my word of honour!

*Oct.* What's your design?

*But.* Leave me and my regiment.

*Oct.* I have full confidence in you. But tell me What are you brooding?

*But.* That the deed will tell you Ask me no more at present. Trust to me. Ye may trust safely. By the living God Ye give him over not to his good angel!

Farewell. [Exit BUTLER.]

*Ser.* [enters with a billet.] A stranger left it and is gone.

The Prince-duke's horses wait for you below.

[Exit Servant.

Oct. [reads.] "Be sure, make haste! Your faithful Isolan."

—O that I had but left this town behind me.

To split upon a rock so near the haven!—

Away! this is no longer a safe place for me!

Where can my son be tarrying?

SCENE VI.—OCTAVIO and MAX PICCOLOMINI. — MAX

*enters in a state of derangement from extreme agitation, his eyes roll wildly, his walk is unsteady, he appears not to observe his father, who stands at a distance, and gazes at him with a countenance expressive of compassion. He paces with long strides through the chamber, then stands still again, and at last throws himself into a chair, staring vacantly at the object directly before him.*

Oct. [advances to MAX.] I am going off, my son.

[Receiving no answer, he takes his hand.

My son, farewell.

Max. Farewell.

Oct. Thou wilt soon follow me?

Max. I follow thee?

Thy way is crooked—it is not my way.

[OCTAVIO drops his hand, and starts back

O, hadst thou been but simple and sincere,

Ne'er had it come to this—all had stood otherwise.

He had not done that foul and horrible deed:

The virtuous had retained their influence o'er him

He had not fallen into the snares of villains.

Wherefore so like a thief, and thief's accomplice

*Oct.* Thou wilt not tear thyself away; thou  
canst not.

O, come, my son! I bid thee save thy virtue.

*Max.* Squander not thou thy words in vain.

The heart I follow, for I dare trust to it.

*Oct.* [*trembling and losing all self-command.*]

*Max!* *Max!* if that most damned thing could be.

If thou—my son—my own blood—(dare I *think*  
it?)

Do sell thyself to him, the infamous,

Do stamp this brand upon our noble house,

Then shall the world behold the horrible deed,

And in unnatural combat shall the steel

Of the son trickle with the father's blood.

*Max.* O hadst thou always better thought of  
men,

Thou hadst then acted better. Curst suspicion!

Unholy miserable doubt! To him

Nothing on earth remains unwrenched and firm,

Who has no faith.

*Oct.* And if I trust thy heart,

Will it be always in thy power to follow it?

*Max.* The heart's voice *thou* hast not o'er-  
power'd—as little

Will Wallenstein be able to o'erpower it.

*Oct.* O, Max! I see thee never more again!

*Max.* Unworthy of thee wilt thou never see me.

*Oct.* I go to Frauenberg—the Pappenheimers

I leave thee here, the Lothrings too; Toscana

And Tiefenbach remain here to protect thee.



They love thee, and are faithful to their oath,  
And will far rather fall in gallant contest  
Than leave their rightful leader, and their honour.

*Max.* Rely on this, I either leave my life  
In the struggle, or conduct them out of Pilsen.

*Oct.* Farewell, my son !

*Max.* Farewell !

*Oct.* How ? not one look  
Of filial love ? No grasp of th' hand at parting ?  
It is a bloody war, to which we are going,  
And the event uncertain and in darkness.  
So used we not to part—it was not so !  
Is it then true, I have a son no longer ?

[*MAX falls into his arms ; they hold each other for a long  
time in a speechless embrace, then go away at different  
sides.*]

*The Curtain drops.*



**THE**  
**DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN.**

**A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

WALLENSTEIN, *Duke of Friedland, Generalissimo of the Imperial Forces in the Thirty Years' War.*

DUCHESS OF FRIEDLAND, *Wife of Wallenstein.*

TIBEKLA, *her Daughter, Princess of Friedland.*

THE COUNTESS TERTSKY, *Sister of the Duchess.*

LADY NEUBRUNN.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, *Lieutenant-General.*

MAX PICCOLOMINI, *his Son, Colonel of a Regiment of Cuirassiers.*

COUNT TERTSKY, *the Commander of several Regiments, and Brother-in-Law of Wallenstein.*

TELLO, *Field-Marshal, Wallenstein's Confidant.*

BUTLER, *an Irishman, Commander of a Regiment of Dragoons.*

GORDON, *Governor of Egra.*

MAJOR GERALDIN.

CAPTAIN DEVEREUX.

CAPTAIN MACDONALD.

NEUMANN, *Captain of Cavalry, Aide-de-Camp to Tertsky.*

SWEDISH CAPTAIN.

SENI.

BURGOMASTER of Egra.

ANSPESSADE *of the Cuirassiers.*

CHAMBERLAIN OF THE CHAMBER, } *belonging to the Duke.*

A PAGE,

Cuirassiers, Dragoons, Servants.

# THE DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN.

## ACT I

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in the House of the DUCHESS OF FRIEDLAND. COUNTESS TERTSKY, THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN. (The two latter sit at the same table at work.)*

*Coun.* [*watching them from the opposite side.*]  
So you have nothing, niece, to ask me?  
Nothing?

I have been waiting for a word from you.  
And could you then endure in all this time  
Not once to speak his name?

[*THEKLA remaining silent, the COUNTESS rises and advances to her.*]

Why comes this?

Perhaps I am already grown superfluous,  
And other ways exist, besides through me?  
Confess it to me, Thekla! have you seen him?

*Thek.* To-day and yesterday I have not seen  
him.

*Coun.* And not heard from him either? Come  
be open!

*Thek.* No syllable.

*Coun.* And still you are so calm?

*Thek.* I am.

*Coun.* May't please you, leave us, Lady Neu-  
brunn! [Exit LADY NEUBRUNN.]

SCENE II.—*The COUNTESS, THEKLA.*

*Coun.* It does not please me, Princess! that  
he holds

Himself so *still*, exactly at *this* time.

*Thek.* Exactly at *this* time?

*Coun.* He now knows all

'Twere now the moment to declare himself.

*Thek.* If I'm to understand you, speak less  
darkly.

*Coun.* 'Twas for that purpose that I bade her  
leave us.

*Thekla*, you are no more a child. Your heart  
Is now no more in nonage: for you love,  
And boldness dwells with love—that *you* have  
proved.

Your nature moulds itself upon your father's  
More than your mother's spirit. Therefore may  
you

Hear, what were too much for her fortitude.

*Thek.* Enough! no further preface, I entreat  
you.

At once out with it! Be it what it may,

It is not possible that it should torture me  
More than this introduction. What have you  
To say to me? Tell me the whole and briefly!

*Coun.* You'll not be frightened—

*Thek.* Name it, I entreat you.

*Coun.* It lies within your power to do your  
father

A weighty service—

*Thek.* Lies within *my* power?

*Coun.* Max Piccolomini loves you. You can  
link him

Indissolubly to your father.

*Thek.* I?

What need of me for that? And is he not  
Already linked to him?

*Coun.* He was.

*Thek.* And wherefore

Should he not be so now—not be so always?

*Coun.* He cleaves to th' Emperor too.

*Thek.* Not more than duty

And honour may demand of him.

*Coun.* We ask

Proofs of his love, and not proofs of his honour.

Duty and honour!

Those are ambiguous words with many meanings.

You should interpret them for him: his love

Should be the sole definer of his honour.

*Thek.* How?

*Coun.* Th' Emperor or you must he re-  
nounce.

*Thek.* He will accompany my father gladly  
In his retirement. From himself you heard,  
How much he wished to lay aside the sword.

*Coun.* He must *not* lay the sword aside, we  
mean ;

He must unsheath it in your father's cause.

*Thek.* He'll spend with gladness and alacrity  
His life, his heart's blood in my father's cause,  
If shame or injury be intended him.

*Coun.* You will not understand me. Well,  
hear then !

Your father has fallen off from the Emperor.  
And is about to join the enemy  
With the whole soldiery—

*Thek.* Alas, my mother !

*Coun.* There needs a great example to draw on  
The army after him. The Piccolomini  
Possess the love and reverence of the troops ;  
They govern all opinions, and wherever  
They lead the way, none hesitate to follow.  
The son secures the father to our interests—  
You've much in your hands at this moment.

*Thek.* Ah,

My miserable mother ! what a death-stroke  
Awaits thee !—No ! She never will survive it.

*Coun.* She will accommodate her soul to that  
Which is and must be. I do know your mother.  
The far-off future weighs upon her heart  
With torture of anxiety ; but is it  
Unalterably, actually present,



She soon resigns herself, and bears it calmly.

*Thek.* O my foreboding bosom ! Even now,  
E'en now 'tis here, that icy hand of horror !  
And my young hope lies shuddering in its grasp ;  
I knew it well—no sooner had I entered,  
A heavy ominous presentiment  
Revealed to me, that spirits of death were hovering  
Over my happy fortune. But why think I  
First of myself ? My mother ! O my mother !

*Coun.* Calm yourself ! Break not out in vain  
lamenting !

Preserve you for your father the firm friend,  
And for yourself the lover, all will yet  
Prove good and fortunate.

*Thek.* Prove good ? What good ?  
Must we not part ? Part ne'er to meet again ?

*Coun.* He parts not from you. He can not  
part from you.

*Thek.* Alas for his sore anguish ! It will rend  
His heart asunder.

*Coun.* If indeed he loves you,  
His resolution will be speedily taken.

*Thek.* His resolution will be speedily taken—  
O do not doubt of that ! A resolution !  
Does there remain one to be taken ?

*Coun.* Hush !  
Collect yourself ! I hear your mother coming.

*Thek.* How shall I bear to see her ?

*Coun.* Collect yourself.

SCENE III.—*To them enter the DUCHESS.*

*Duch.* [*to the COUNTESS.*] Who was here sister?  
ter? I heard some one talking,

And passionately too.

*Coun.* Nay! There was no one.

*Duch.* I am grown so timorous, every trifling  
noise

Scatters my spirits, and announces to me

The footstep of some messenger of evil.

And can you tell me, sister, what the event is?

Will he agree to do the Emperor's pleasure,

And send th' horse regiments to the Cardinal?

Tell me, has he dismissed Von Questenberg

With a favourable answer?

*Coun.* No, he has not.

*Duch.* Alas! then all is lost! I see it coming,  
The worst that can come! Yes, they will depose

him;

The accursed business of the Regensburg diet

Will all be acted o'er again!

*Coun.* No! never!

Make your heart easy, sister, as to that.

[THEKLA, in extreme agitation, throws herself upon her  
Mother, and enfolds her in her arms, weeping.]

*Duch.* Yes, my poor child!

Thou too hast lost a most affectionate godmother

In th' Empress. O that stern unbending man!

In this unhappy marriage what have I

Not suffered, not endured! For ev'n as if

I had been linked on to some wheel of fire  
That restless, ceaseless, whirls impetuous onward,  
I have passed a life of frights and horrors with  
him.

And ever to the brink of some abyss  
With dizzy headlong violence he whirls me.

Nay, do not weep, my child! Let not my sufferings

Presignify unhappiness to thee,  
Nor blacken with their shade the *fate* that waits  
thee.

There lives no second Friedland; thou, my child,  
Hast not to fear thy mother's destiny.

*Thok.* O let us supplicate him, dearest mother !  
Quick ! quick ! here's no abiding place for us.  
Here every coming hour broods into life  
Some new affrightful monster.

*Duch.* Thou wilt share  
An easier, calmer lot, my child ! We too,  
I and thy father, witnessed happy days.  
Still think I with delight of those first years,  
When he was making progress with glad effort,  
When his ambition was a genial fire,  
Not that consuming flame which now it is.  
The Emperor loved him, trusted him : and all  
He undertook could not but be successful.  
But since that ill-starred day at Regensburg,  
Which plunged him headlong from his dignity,  
A gloomy uncompanionable spirit,  
Unsteady and suspicious, has possessed him.

His quiet mind forsook him, and no longer  
 Did he yield up himself in joy and faith  
 To his old luck, and individual power ;  
 But thenceforth turned his heart and best affections  
 All to those cloudy sciences, which never  
 Have yet made happy him who followed them.

*Coun.* You see it, sister ! as *your* eyes permit  
 you.

But surely this is not the conversation  
 To pass the time in which we are waiting for him.  
 You know he will be soon here. Would you  
 have him

Find *her* in this condition ?

*Duch.*

Come, my child !

Come, wipe away thy tears, and show thy father  
 A cheerful countenance. See, the tie-knot here  
 Is off—this hair must not hang so dishevelled.

Come, dearest ! dry thy tears up. They deform  
 Thy gentle eye—well now—what was I saying ?  
 Yes, in good truth, this Piccolomini  
 Is a most noble and deserving gentleman.

*Coun.* That is he, sister !

*Thek.* [*to the Countess, with marks of great oppression of spirits.*] Aunt, you will excuse me ?

[*Is going*]

*Coun.* But whither ? See, your father comes.

*Thek.* I cannot see him now.

*Coun.*

Nay, but bethink you.

*Thek.* Believe me, I cannot sustain his presence.

*Coun.* But he will miss you, will ask after you

*Duch.* What now? Why is she going?

*Coun.* She's not well.

*Duch.* [*anxiously.*] What ails then my beloved child?

[*Both follow the PRINCESS, and endeavour to detain her.*  
During this WALLENSTEIN appears, engaged in conversation with ILLO.

SCENE IV.—WALLENSTEIN, ILLO, COUNTESS, DUCHESS,  
THEKLA.

*Wal.* All quiet in the camp?

*Illo.* It is all quiet.

*Wal.* In a few hours may couriers come from  
Prague

With tidings, that this capital is ours.

Then we may drop the mask, and to the troops  
Assembled in this town make known the measure  
And its result together. In such cases  
Example does the whole. Whoever is foremost  
Still leads the herd. An imitative creature  
Is man. The troops at Prague conceive no other,  
Than that the Pilsen army has gone through  
The forms of homage to us; and in Pilsen  
They shall swear fealty to us, because  
The example has been given them by Prague.  
Butler, you tell me, has declared himself.

*Illo.* At his own bidding, unsolicited,  
He came to offer you himself and regiment.

*Wal.* I find we must not give implicit credence  
To every warning voice that makes itself

Be listened to in th' heart. To hold us back,  
 Oft does the lying spirit counterfeit  
 The voice of truth and inward revelation,  
 Scattering false oracles. And thus have I  
 To intreat forgiveness, for that secretly  
 I've wrong'd this honourable gallant man,  
 This Butler: for a feeling, of the which  
 I am not master, (*fear* I would not call it)  
 Creeps o'er me instantly, with sense of shuddering,  
 At his approach, and stops love's joyous motion.  
 And this same man, against whom I am warned,  
 This honest man is he, who reaches to me  
 The first pledge of my fortune.

*Illo.*

And doubt not

That his example will win over to you  
 The best men in the army.

*Wal.*

Go and send

Isolani hither. Send him immediately.

He is under recent obligations to me.

With him will I commence the trial. Go.

[*ILLO exit.*]

*Wal.* [*turns himself round to the females.*] Lo,  
 there the mother with the darling daughter!  
 For once we'll have an interval of rest—  
 Come! my heart yearns to live a cloudless hour  
 In the beloved circle of my family.

*Coun.* 'Tis long since we've been thus together,  
 Brother.

*Wal.* [*to the COUNTESS aside.*] Can she sustain  
 the news? Is she prepared?

*Coun.* Not yet.

*Wal.* Come here, my sweet girl! Seat thee by me,

For there is a good spirit on thy lips.

Thy mother praised to me thy ready skill:

She says a voice of melody dwells in thee,

Which doth enchant the soul. Now such a voice

Will drive away from me the evil demon

That beats his black wings close above my head.

*Duch.* Where is thy lute, my daughter? Let  
thy father

Hear some small trial of thy skill.

*Thek.*

My mother!

I—

*Duch.* Trembling? Come, collect thyself. Go,  
cheer

Thy father.

*Thek.* O my mother! I—I cannot.

*Coun.* How, what is that, niece?

*Thek.* [to the COUNTESS.] O spare me—sing—  
now—in this sore anxiety

Of the o'erburthened soul—to sing to *him*,

Who is thrusting, even now, my mother headlong

Into her grave!

*Duch.* How, *Thekla*? Humoursome?

What! shall thy father have expressed a wish  
In vain?

*Coun.* Here is the lute.

*Thek.*

My God! how can I—

[*The orchestra plays. During the ritornello THEKLA*

*expresses in her gestures and countenance the struggle of her feelings: and at the moment that she should begin to sing, contracts herself together, as one shuddering, throws the instrument down, and retires abruptly.]*

*Duch.* My child! O she is ill—

*Wal.*

What ails the maiden?

Say, is she often so?

*Coun.*

Since then herself

Has now betrayed it, I too must no longer  
Conceal it.

*Wal.* What?

*Coun.*

She loves him!

*Wal.*

Loves him! Whom?

*Coun.* Max does she love! Max Piccolomini.  
Hast thou ne'er noticed it? Nor yet my sister?

*Duch.* Was it this that lay so heavy on her  
heart?

God's blessing on thee, my sweet child! Thou  
needest

Never take shame upon thee for thy choice.

*Coun.* This journey,—if 'twere not thy aim,  
ascribe it

To thine own self. Thou should'st have chosen  
another

To have attended her.

*Wal.*

And does he know it?

*Coun.*

Yes, and he hopes to win her.

*Wal.*

Hopes to win her.

Is the boy mad?



*Coun.* Well—hear it from themselves.

*Wal.* He thinks 'to carry off Duke Friedland's daughter!

Ay?—The thought pleases me.

The young man has no grovelling spirit.

*Coun.*

Since

Such and such constant favour you have shown him——

*Wal.* He chooses finally to be my heir.

And true it is, I love the youth; yea, honour him.

But must he therefore be my daughter's husband!

Is it daughters only? Is it only children

That we must show our favour by?

*Duch.* His noble disposition and his manners—

*Wal.* Win him my heart, but not my daughter.

*Duch.*

Then

His rank, his ancestors—

*Wal.*

Ancestors! What?

He is a subject, and my son-in-law

I will seek out upon the thrones of Europe.

*Duch.* O dearest Albrecht! Climb we not too high,

Lest we should fall too low.

*Wal.*

What? have I paid

A price so heavy to ascend this eminence,

And jut out high above the common herd,

Only to close the mighty part I play

In life's great drama, with a common kinsman?

Have I for this-- [*Stops suddenly, repressing himself.*

She is the only thing

That will remain behind of me on earth;  
 And I will see a crown around her head,  
 Or die in the attempt to place it there.  
 I hazard all—all ! and for this alone,  
 To lift her into greatness—

Yea, in this moment, in the which we are speak  
 ing— [*He recollects himself.*]

And I must now, like a soft-hearted father,  
 Couple together in good peasant fashion  
 The pair, that chance to suit each other's liking—  
 And I must do it now, even now, when I  
 Am stretching out the wreath that is to twine  
 My full accomplished work—no ! she is the jewel  
 Which I have treasured long, my last, my noblest,  
 And 'tis my purpose not to let her from me  
 For less than a king's sceptre.

*Duch.* O my husband !  
 You're ever building, building to the clouds,  
 Still building higher, and still higher building,  
 And ne'er reflect, that the poor narrow basis  
 Cannot sustain the giddy tottering column.

*Wal.* [*to the COUNTESS.*] Have you announced  
 the place of residence  
 Which I have destined for her ?

*Coun.* No ! not yet.  
 'Twere better you yourself disclosed it to her.

*Duch.* How ? Do we not return to Karn then ?

*Wal.* No.

*Duch.* And to no other of your lands or seats ?

*Wal.* You would not be secure there.

*Duch.* Not secure  
In the Emperor's realms, beneath the Emperor's  
Protection?

*Wal.* Friedland's wife may be permitted  
No longer to hope *that*.

*Duch.* O God in heaven!  
And have you brought it even to this?

*Wal.* In Holland  
You'll find protection.

*Duch.* In a Lutheran country?  
What? And you send us into Lutheran countries?

*Wal.* Duke Franz of Lauenburg conducts you  
thither.

*Duch.* Duke Franz of Lauenburg?  
The ally of Sweden, the Emperor's enemy!

*Wal.* The Emperor's enemies are mine no  
longer.

*Duch.* [*casting a look of terror on the DUKE  
and the COUNTESS.*] Is it then true? It is. You  
are degraded?

Deposed from the command? O God in heaven!

*Coun.* [*aside to the DUKE.*] Leave her in this  
belief. Thou seest she cannot  
Support the real truth.

SCENE V.—*To them enter COUNT TERTSKY.*

*Coun.* —Tertsky,  
What ails him? What an image of affright!  
He looks as he had seen a ghost.

*Ter.* [*leading WALLENSTEIN aside.*] Is it thy command that all the Croats—

*Wal.*

Mine!

*Ter.* We are betrayed.

*Wal.*

What?

*Ter.*

They are off! This night

The Jagers likewise—all the villages

In the whole round are empty.

*Wal.*

Isolani?

*Ter.* Him thou hast sent away. Yea, surely.

*Wal.*

I?

*Ter.* No! Hast thou not sent him off? Nor Deodate?

They are vanished both of them.

SCENE VI.—*To them enter ILLO.*

*Illo.* Has Tertsky told thee?

*Ter.*

He knows all.

*Illo.*

And likewise

That Esterhazy, Goetz, Maradas, Kaunitz,

Kolalto, Palli, have forsaken thee?

*Ter.* Damnation!

*Wal.* [*winks at them.*] Hush!

*Coun.* [*who has been watching them anxiously from the distance, and now advances to them.*]

Tertsky! Heaven! What is it? What has happened?

*Wal.* [*scarcely suppressing his emotions.*] Nothing! let us be gone!

*Ter.* [*following him.*] Theresa, it is nothing.

*Coun.* [*holding him back.*] Nothing? Do I not see, that all the life-blood

Has left your cheeks—look you not like a ghost?  
That even my brother but affects a calmness?

*Page.* [*enters.*] An Aide-de-Camp inquires  
for the Count Tertsy.

[*TERTSKY follows the Page.*

*Wal.* Go, hear his business.

[*To ILLO.*] This could not have happened  
So unsuspected without mutiny.

Who was on guard at the gates?

*Illo.* 'Twas Tieffenbach.

*Wal.* Let Tieffenbach leave guard without delay,  
And Tertsy's grenadiers relieve him.

[*ILLO is going.*

Stop!

Hast thou heard aught of Butler?

*Illo.* Him I met.

He will be here himself immediately.

Butler remains unshaken.

[*ILLO exit. WALLENSTEIN is following him.*

*Coun.* Let him not leave thee, sister! go, detain  
him!

There's some misfortune.

*Duch.* [*changing to him.*] Gracious heaven!  
What is it?

*Wal.* Be tranquil! leave me, sister! dearest  
wife!

We are in camp, and this is nought unusual;

Here storm and sunshine follow one another  
 With rapid interchanges. These fierce spirits  
 Champ the curb angrily, and never yet  
 Did quiet bless the temples of the leader.  
 If I am to stay, go you. The plaints of women  
 Ill suit the scene where men must act.

*[He is going : TERTSKY returns]*

*Ter.* Remain here. From this window must  
 we see it.

*Wal.* *[to the COUNTESS.]* Sister, retire !

*Coun.* No—never.

*Wal.* 'Tis my will.

*Ter.* *[leads the COUNTESS aside, and drawing  
 her attention to the DUCHESS.]* Theresa !

*Duch.* Sister, come ! since he commands it.

#### SCENE VII.—WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY.

*Wal.* *[stepping to the window.]* What now,  
 then ?

*Ter.* There are strange movements among all  
 the troops,

And no one knows the cause. Mysteriously,  
 With gloomy silentness, the several corps  
 Marshal themselves, each under its own banners.  
 Tiefenbach's corps makes threatening movements  
 only

The Pappenheimers still remain aloof

In their own quarters, and let no one enter.

*Wal.* Does Piccolomini appear among them ?

*Ter.* We are seeking him : he is nowhere to be met with.

*Wal.* What did the Aide-de-Camp deliver to you ?

*Ter.* My regiments had dispatched him ; yet once more

They swear fidelity to thee, and wait

The shout for onset, all prepared, and eager.

*Wal.* But whence arose this larum in the camp ?

It should have been kept secret from the army,  
Till fortune had decided for us at Prague.

*Ter.* O that thou hadst believed me ! Yester evening

Did we conjure thee not to let that skulker,

That fox, Octavio, pass the gates of Pilsen.

Thou gav'st him thy own horses to flee from thee.

*Wal.* The old tune still ! Now, once for all,  
no more

Of this suspicion—it is doting folly.

*Ter.* Thou didst confide in Isolani too ;  
And lo ! he was the first that did desert thee.

*Wal.* It was but yesterday I rescued him  
From abject wretchedness. Let that go by.

I never reckon'd yet on gratitude.

And wherein doth he wrong in going from me ?

He follows still the god whom all his life

He has worshipped at the gaming table. With

My fortune, and my seeming destiny,

He made the bond, and broke it not with me.

I am but the ship in which his hopes were stowed,  
 And with the which well-pleased and confident  
 He traversed the open sea; now he beholds it  
 In imminent jeopardy among the coast-rocks,  
 And hurries to preserve his wares. As light  
 As the free bird from the hospitable twig  
 Where it had nested, he flies off from me:  
 No human tie is snapped betwixt us two.  
 Yea, he deserves to find himself deceived,  
 Who seeks a heart in the unthinking man.  
 Like shadows on a stream, the forms of life  
 Impress their characters on the smooth forehead,  
 Nought sinks into the bosom's silent depth:  
 Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure  
 Moves the light fluids lightly; but no soul  
 Warmeth the inner frame.

*Ter.*

Yet, would I rather

Trust the smooth brow than that deep furrowed  
 one.

SCENE VIII.—WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY, ILLO, *who  
 enters agitated with rage.*

*Illo.* Treason and mutiny!

*Ter.*

And what further now?

*Illo.* Tiefenbach's soldiers, when I gave the  
 orders

To go off guard—Mutinous villains!

*Ter.*

Well!

*Wal.* What followed?



*Illo.* They refused obedience to them.

*Ter.* Fire on them instantly! Give out the order.

*Wal.* Gently! what cause did they assign?

*Illo.* No other

They said, had right to issue orders but  
Lieutenant-General *Piccolomini*.

*Wal.* [*in convulsion of agony.*] What? How  
is that?

*Illo.* He takes that office on him by commission,  
Under sign-manual of the emperor.

*Ter.* From th' Emperor—hear'st thou, Duke?

*Illo.* At his incitement

The Generals made that stealthy flight—

*Ter.* Duke! hearest thou?

*Illo.* Caraffa too and Montecuculi,  
Are missing, with six other Generals,  
All whom he had induced to follow him.  
This plot he has long had in writing by him  
From the Emperor; but 'twas finally concluded  
With all the detail of the operation  
Some days ago with the Envoy Questenberg.

[*WALLENSTEIN sinks down into a chair and covers his face*]

*Ter.* O hadst thou but believed me!

SCENE IX.—*To them enter the COUNTESS.*

*Coun.*

This suspense,

This horrid fear—I can no longer bear it.

For heaven's sake, tell me, what has taken place.

*Illo.* The regiments are all falling off from us.

*Ter.* Octavio Piccolomini is a traitor.

*Coun.* O my foreboding !

[*Rushes out of the room.*]

*Ter.* Hadst thou but believed me !

Now seest thou how the stars have lied to thee.

*Wal.* The stars lie not ; but we have here a  
work

Wrought counter to the stars and destiny.

The science is still honest : this false heart

Forces a lie on the truth-telling heaven.

On a divine law divination rests ;

Where nature deviates from that law, and stum-  
bles

Out of her limits, there all science errs.

True, I did not suspect ! Were it superstition

Never by such suspicion t' have affronted

The human form, O may that time ne'er come

In which I shame me of the infirmity.

The wildest savage drinks not with the victim,

Into whose breast he means to plunge the sword

This, this, Octavio, was no hero's deed :

'Twas not thy prudence that did conquer mine ;

A bad heart triumphed o'er an honest one.

No shield received the assassin stroke ; thou  
plungest

Thy weapon on an unprotected breast—

Against such weapons I am but a child.

SCENE X.—*To these enter BUTLER.*

*Ter.* [*meeting him.*] O look there! Butler!  
Here we've still a friend!

*Wal.* [*meets him with outspread arms, and embraces him with warmth.*] Come to my heart, old comrade! Not the sun

Looks out upon us more revivingly

In the earliest month of spring,

Than a friend's countenance in such an hour.

*But.* My General: I come—

*Wal.* [*leaning on BUTLER's shoulders.*] Know'st thou already?

That old man has betrayed me to the Emperor.

What say'st thou? Thirty years have we  
together

Lived out, and held out, sharing joy and hardship.

We have slept in one camp-bed, drunk from one  
glass,

One morsel shared! I leaned myself on *him*,

As now I lean me on *thy* faithful shoulder.

And now in the very moment, when, all love,

All confidence, my bosom beat to his,

He sees and takes the advantage, stabs the knife  
Slowly into my heart.

[*He hides his face on BUTLER's breast.*]

*But.*

Forget the false one.

What is your present purpose?

*Wal.*

Well remembered



Wal. [*with eager expectation.*] Well?

But. Is already here.

Ter. and Illo. [*at the same time.*] Already here!

Wal. My courier?

But. For some hours.

Wal. And I not know it?

But. The sentinels detain him

In custody.

Illo. [*stamping with his foot.*] Damnation!

But. And his letter

Was broken open, and is circulated

Through the whole camp.

Wal. You know what it contains?

But. Question me not.

Ter. Illo! alas for us.

Wal. Hide nothing from me—I can hear the worst.

Prague then is lost. It is. Confess it freely.

But. Yes! Prague *is* lost. And all the several  
regiments

At Budweiss, Tabor, Braunau, Königingrätz,

At Brünn, and Znaim, have forsaken you,

And ta'en the oaths of fealty anew

To the Emperor. Yourself, with Kinsky, Tertsy,

And Illo, have been sentenced.

[TERTSKY and ILLO express alarm and fury. WALL-  
LENSTEIN remains firm and collected.]

Wal. 'Tis decided!

'Tis well! I have received a sudden cure

From all the pangs of doubt; with steady stream

Once more my life-blood flows ! My soul's secure !  
 In the night only Friedland's stars can beam.  
 Lingering irresolute, with fitful fears  
 I drew the sword—'twas with an inward strife,  
 While yet the choice was mine. The murderous

*knife*

Is lifted for my heart ! Doubt disappears !  
 I fight now for my head and for my life.

*[Exit WALLENSTEIN ; the others follow him.]*

SCENE XI.—COUNTESS TERTSKY *(enters from a side Room.)*

I can endure no longer. No ! *[Looks around her.]*  
 Where are they !

No one is here. They leave me all alone,  
 Alone in this sore anguish of suspense.  
*[And I must wear the outward show of calmness]*  
 Before my sister, and shut in within me  
 The pangs and agonies of my crowded bosom.  
 It is not to be borne.—If all should fail ;  
 If—if he must go over to the Swedes,  
 An empty-handed fugitive, and not  
 As an ally, a covenanted equal,  
 A proud commander with his army following ;  
 If we must wander on from land to land,  
 Like the Count Palatine, of fallen greatness  
 An ignominious monument—But no !  
 That day I will not see ! And could himself  
 Endure to sink so low, I would not bear  
 To see him so low sunken.

## SCENE XII.—COUNTESS, DUCHESS, THEKLA

*Thek.* [*endeavouring to hold back the DUCHESS.*]

Dear mother, do stay here!

*Duch.*

No! Here is yet

Some frightful mystery that is hidden from me.

Why does my sister shun me? Don't I see her

Full of suspense and anguish roam about

From room to room?—Art thou not full of terror?

And what import these silent nods and gestures

Which stealthwise thou exchangest with her?

*Thek.*

Nothing:

Nothing dear mother!

*Duch.* [*to the COUNTESS.*] Sister, I will know.

*Coun.* What boots it now to hide it from her?

Sooner

Or later she *must* learn to hear and bear it.

'Tis not the time now to indulge infirmity;—

Courage beseems us now, a heart collected,

And exercise and previous discipline

Of fortitude. One word and over with it!

Sister you are deluded. You believe

The Duke has been deposed—The Duke is not

Deposed—he is——

*Thek.* [*going to the COUNTESS.*] What? do you  
wish to kill her?

*Coun.* The Duke is——

*Thek.* [*throwing her arms round her mother.*] O  
stand firm! stand firm, my mother!

*Coun.* Revolted is the Duke, he is preparing

To join the enemy, the army leave him.  
And all has failed.

*{ During these words the DUCHESS totters, and falls in a fainting fit into the arms of her daughter. While THEKLA is calling for help, the Curtain drops.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A spacious Room in the DUKE OF FRIEDLAND'S Palace.*

*Wal. [in armour.]* Thou hast gained thy point, Octavio! Once more am I  
Almost as friendless as at Regensburg.  
There I had nothing left me, but myself—  
But what one man can do, you have now experience.

The twigs have you hewed off, and here I stand  
A leafless trunk. But in the sap within  
Lives the creating power, and a new world  
May sprout forth from it. Once already have I  
Proved myself worth an army to you—I alone!  
Before the Swedish strength your troops had melted;

Beside the Lech sank Tilly, your last hope;  
Into Bavaria, like a winter torrent,  
Did that Gustavus pour, and at Vienna  
In his own palace did the Emperor tremble.  
Soldiers were scarce, for still the multitude  
Follow the luck; all eyes were turned on me



Their helper in distress ; the Emperor's pride  
 Bowed itself down before the man he had injured.  
 'Twas I must rise, and with creative word  
 Assemble forces in the desolate camps.  
 I did it. Like a god of war, my name [and, lo  
 Went through the world. The drum was beat—  
 The plough, the workshop is forsaken, all  
 Swarm to the old familiar long-loved banners ;  
 And as the wood-choir rich in melody  
 Assemble quick around the bird of wonder,  
 When first his throat swells with his magic song,  
 So did the warlike youth of Germany  
 Crowd in around the image of my eagle.  
 I feel myself the being that I was.  
 It is the soul that builds itself a body,  
 And Friedland's camp will not remain unfilled.  
 Lead then your thousands out to meet me—true !  
 They are accustomed under me to conquer,  
 But not against me. If the head and limbs  
 Separate from each other, 'twill be soon  
 Made manifest, in which the soul abode.

[ILLO and TERTSKY enter.]

Courage, friends ! Courage ! We are still unvan-  
 quished ;

I feel my footing firm ; five regiments, Tertsky,  
 Are still our own, and Butler's gallant troops ;  
 And a host of sixteen thousand Swedes to-morrow.  
 I was not stronger, when nine years ago  
 I marched forth, with glad heart and high of hope,  
 To conquer Germany for the Emperor.

SCENE II.—WALLENSTEIN, ILLO, TERTSKY. (*To them enter NEUMANN, who leads TERTSKY aside, and talks with him.*)

*Ter.* What do they want?

*Wal.*

What now?

*Ter.*

Ten Cuirassiers

From Pappenheim request leave to address you  
In the name of the regiment.

*Wal.* [*hastily to NEUMANN.*] Let them enter.

[*Exit NEUMANN.*]

*Illo*

May end in something. Mark you. They are still  
Doubtful, and may be won.

SCENE III.—WALLENSTEIN, TERTSKY, ILLO, ten Cuirassiers, (*led by an Anspessade,\* march up and arrange themselves, after the word of command, in one front before the DUKE, and make their obeisance. He takes his hat off, and immediately covers himself again.*)

*Ans.* Halt! Front! Present!

*Wal.* [*after he has run through them with his eye, to the Anspessade.*] I know thee well. Thou art of Brugg in Flanders:

Thy name is Mercy.

*Ans.*

Henry Mercy.

\* Anspessade, in German, Gefreiter, a soldier inferior to a corporal, but above the sentinels. The German name implies that he is exempt from mounting guard.

*Wal.* Thou wert cut off on the march, surrounded by the Hessians, and didst fight thy way with a hundred and eighty men through their thousand.

*Ans.* 'Twas even so, General!

*Wal.* What reward hadst thou for this gallant exploit?

*Ans.* That which I asked for : the honour to serve in this corps.

*Wal.* [*turning to a second.*] Thou wert among the volunteers that seized and made booty of the Swedish battery at Altenburg.

*2nd Cui.* Yes, General!

*Wal.* I forget no one with whom I have exchanged words. [*A pause.*] Who sends you?

*Ans.* Your noble regiment, the Cuirassiers of Piccolomini.

*Wal.* Why does not your colonel deliver in your request, according to the custom of service?

*Ans.* Because we would first know *whom* we serve.

*Wal.* Begin your address.

*Ans.* [*giving the word of command.*] Shoulder your arms!

*Wal.* [*turning to a third.*] Thy name is Risbeck, Cologne is thy birth-place.

*3rd Cui.* Risbeck of Cologne.

*Wal.* It was thou that broughtest in the Swedish colonel, Diebald, prisoner, in the camp at Nuremberg.

*3rd Cui.* It was not I, General!

*Wal.* Perfectly right! It was thy elder brother: thou hadst a younger brother too: Where did he stay?

*3rd Cui.* He is stationed at Olmütz with the Imperial army.

*Wal.* [*to the An-pessade.*] Now then—begin.

*Ans.* There came to hand a letter from the Emperor,

Commanding us——

*Wal.* [*interrupting him.*] Who chose you?

*Ans.* Every company

Drew its own man by lot.

*Wal.* Now! to the business.

*Ans.* There came to hand a letter from the Emperor;

Commanding us collectively, from thee  
All duties of obedience to withdraw,  
Because thou wert an enemy and traitor.

*Wal.* And what did you determine?

*Ans.* All our comrades

At Braunau, Budweiss, Prague, and Olmütz, have  
Obeyed already; and the regiments here,  
Tiefenbach and Toscana, instantly  
Did follow their example. But—but we  
Do not believe that thou'rt an enemy  
And traitor to thy country, hold it merely  
For lie and trick, and a trumped up Spanish story

[*With warmth*]

Thyself shalt tell us what thy purpose is,  
For we have found thee still sincere and true:  
No mouth shall interpose itself betwixt

The gallant General and the gallant troops.

*Wal.* Therein I recognize my Pappenheimers.

*Ans.* And this proposal makes thy regiment to thee :

Is it thy purpose merely to preserve  
In thy own hands this military sceptre,  
Which so becomes thee, which the Emperor  
Made over to thee by a covenant?  
Is it thy purpose merely to remain  
Supreme commander of the Austrian armies?—  
We will stand by thee, General ! and guarantee  
Thy honest rights against all opposition.  
And should it chance, that all the other regiments  
Turn from thee, by ourselves will we stand forth  
Thy faithful soldiers, and, as is our duty,  
Far rather let ourselves be cut to pieces,  
Than suffer thee to fall. But if it be  
As the Emperor's letter says, if it be true,  
That thou in traitorous wise wilt lead us over  
To the enemy, which God in heaven forbid !  
Then we too will forsake thee, and obey  
That letter——

*Wal.* Hear me, children !

*Ans.* Yes, or no !

There needs no other answer.

*Wal.* Yield attention.

You're men of sense, examine for yourselves ;  
Ye think, and do not follow with the herd :  
And therefore have I always shown you honour  
Above all others, suffered you to reason ;

Have treated you as free men, and my orders  
Were but the echoes of your prior suffrage.—

*Ans.* Most fair and noble has thy conduct been  
To us, my General! With thy confidence  
Thou hast honoured us, and shown us grace and  
favour

Beyond all other regiments; and thou seest  
We follow not the common herd. We will  
Stand by thee faithfully. Speak but one word—  
Thy word shall satisfy us, that it is not  
A treason which thou meditatest—that  
Thou meanest not to lead the army over  
To the enemy; nor e'er betray thy country.

*Wal.* Me, me are they betraying. The Emperor  
Hath sacrificed me to my enemies,  
And I must fall, unless my gallant troops  
Will rescue me. See! I confide in you.  
And be your hearts my stronghold! At this breast  
The aim is taken, at this hoary head.  
This is your Spanish gratitude, this is our  
Requital for that murderous fight at Lützen!  
For this we threw the naked breast against  
The halbert, made for this the frozen earth  
Our bed, and the hard stone our pillow! never

stream

Too rapid for us, nor wood too impervious:  
With cheerful spirit we pursued that Mansfeld  
Through all the turns and windings of his flight  
Yea, our whole life was but one restless march;  
And homeless, as the stirring wind, we travelled

O'er the war-wasted earth. And now, even now  
 That we have well nigh finished the hard toil,  
 The unthankful, the curse-laden toil of weapons,  
 With faithful indefatigable arm  
 Have rolled the heavy war-load up the hill,  
 Behold! this boy of the Emperor's bears away  
 The honours of the peace, an easy prize!  
 He'll weave, forsooth, into his flaxen locks  
 The olive branch, the hard-earned ornament  
 Of this gray head, grown gray beneath the helmet.

*Ans.* That shall he not, while we can hinder it!  
 No one, but thou, who hast conducted it  
 With fame, shall end this war, this frightful war.  
 Thou led'st us out into the bloody field  
 Of death, thou and no other shalt conduct us home,  
 Rejoicing to the lovely plains of peace—  
 Shalt share with us the fruits of the long toil—

*Wal.* What? Think you then at length in late  
 old age  
 To enjoy the fruits of toil? Believe it not.  
 Never, no never, will you see the end  
 Of the contest! you and me, and all of us,  
 This war will swallow up! War, war, not peace,  
 Is Austria's wish; and therefore, because I  
 Endeavoured after peace, therefore I fall.  
 For what cares Austria, how long the war  
 Wears out the armies and lays waste the world?  
 She will but wax and grow amid the ruin,  
 And still win new domains.

[*The Cuirassiers express agitation by their gestures*

Ye're moved—I see

A noble rage flash from your eyes, ye warriors !  
Oh that my spirit might possess you now  
Daring as once it led you to the battle !  
Ye would stand by me with your veteran arms,  
Protect me in my rights ; and this is noble !  
But think not that *you* can accomplish it,  
Your scanty number ! to no purpose will you  
Have sacrificed you for your General. [*Confidentially*  
No ! let us tread securely, seek for friends ;  
The Swedes have proffered us assistance, let us  
Wear for a while the appearance of good will,  
And use them for your profit, till we both  
Carry the fate of Europe in our hands,  
And from our camp to the glad jubilant world  
Lead Peace forth with the garland on her head !

*Ans.* 'Tis then but mere appearances which thou  
Dost put on with the Swede ? Thou'lt not betray  
The Emperor ? Wilt not turn us into Swedes ?  
This is the only thing which we desire  
To learn from thee.

*Wal.* What care I for the Swedes ?  
I hate them as I hate the pit of hell,  
And under Providence I trust right soon  
To chase them to their homes across their Baltic.  
My cares are only for the whole : I have  
A heart—it bleeds within me for the miseries  
And piteous groaning of my fellow Germans.  
Ye are but common men, but ye think  
With minds not common ; ye appear to me





*Wal.* Cursed be this counsel, and accursed  
who gave it!

*[To the Curassiers, who are retiring.]*

Halt, children, halt! There's some mistake in  
this;

Hark!—I will punish it severely. Stop!

They do not hear. *[to ILLO.]* Go after them,  
assure them,

And bring them back to me, cost what it may.

*[ILLO hurries out.]*

This hurls us headlong. Butler! Butler!

You are my evil genius, wherefore must you

Announce it in their presence? It was all

In a fair way. They were half won, those mad-  
men

With their improvident over-readiness:—

A cruel game is Fortune playing with me.

*[The zeal of friends it is that razes me,*

*And not the hate of enemies.]*

SCENE V.—*To these enter the DUCHESS, who rushes into the  
Chamber. THERESA and the COUNTESS follow her.*

*Duch.*

O, Albrecht!

What hast thou done?

*Wal.*

And now comes this beside.

*Coun.* Forgive me, brother! It was not in  
my power.

They know all.

*Duch.* What hast thou done?

*Coun.* [to TERTSKY.] Is there no hope? Is  
all lost utterly?

*Ter.* All lost. No hope. Prague in the Em-  
peror's hands,

The soldiery have ta'en their oaths anew.

*Coun.* That lurking hypocrite, Octavio!

Count Max is off too?

*Ter.* Where can he be? He's

Gone over to the Emperor with his father.

[THEKLA rushes out into the arms of her mother, hiding  
her face in her bosom.]

*Duch.* [enfolding her in her arms.] Unhappy  
child! and more unhappy mother!

*Wal.* [aside to TERTSKY.] Quick! Let a car-  
riage stand in readiness

In the court behind the palace. Scherfenberg

Be their attendant; he is faithful to us;

To Eggra he'll conduct them, and we follow.

[To ILLO, who returns.]

Thou hast not brought them back?

*Illo.* Hear'st thou the uproar?

The whole corps of the Pappenheimers is

Drawn out: the younger Piccolomini,

Their Colonel, they require; for they affirm,

That he is in the palace here, a prisoner;

And if thou dost not instantly deliver him,

They will find means to free him with the sword

[All stand amazed.]

*Ter.* What shall we make of this?

*Wal.* Said I not so?  
O my prophetic heart! he is still here.  
He has not betrayed me—he could not betray me.  
I never doubted of it.

*Count.* If he be  
Still here, then all goes well; for I know what  
[*Embracing.*] *THEKLA.*  
Will keep him here for ever.

*Ter.* It can't be.  
His father has betrayed us, is gone over  
To the Emperor—the son could not have ventured  
To stay behind.

*Thek.* [*her eye fixed on the door.*] There he is!

SCENE VI.—*To these enter MAX PICCOLOMINI.*

*Max.* Yes! here he is! I can endure no longer  
To creep on tiptoe round this house, and lurk  
In ambush for a favourable moment.

This loitering, this suspense exceeds my powers.

[*Advancing to THEKLA, who has thrown herself into her  
mother's arms.*]

Turn not thine eyes away. O look upon me!  
Confess it freely before all. Fear no one.  
Let who will hear that we both love each other:  
Wherefore continue to conceal it? Secrecy  
Is for the happy—misery, hopeless misery,  
Needeth no veil! Beneath a thousand suns  
It dares act openly.

[*He observes the COUNTESS looking on THEKLA with  
expressions of triumph.*]

No, lady! No!

Expect not, hope it not. I am not come  
To stay: to bid farewell, farewell for ever,  
For this I come! 'Tis over! I must leave thee!  
Thekla, I must—*must* leave thee! Yet thy hatred  
Let me not take with me. I pray thee, grant me  
One look of sympathy, only one look.

Say that thou dost not hate me. Say it to me,

Thekla!

[*Grasps her hand.*]

O God! I cannot leave this spot—I cannot—  
Cannot let go this hand. O tell me, Thekla!  
That thou dost suffer with me, art convinced  
That I can not act otherwise.

[THEKLA, *avoiding his look, points with her hand to her father.* MAX *turns round to the DUKE, whom he had not till then perceived.*]

Thou here? It was not thou, whom here I sought.  
I trusted never more to have beheld thee.  
My business is with her alone. Here will I  
Receive a full acquittal from this heart—  
For any other I am no more concerned.

*Wal.* Think'st thou, that fool-like, I shall let  
thee go,

And act the mock-magnanimous with thee?  
Thy father is become a villain to me;  
I hold thee for his son, and nothing more:  
Nor to no purpose shalt thou have been given  
Into my power. Think not, that I will honour  
That ancient love, which so remorselessly  
He mangled. They are now past by, those hours

Of friendship and forgiveness. Hate and vengeance

Succeed—'tis now their turn—I too can throw  
All feelings of the man aside—can prove  
Myself as much a monster as thy father!

*Max.* [*calmly.*] Thou wilt proceed with me, as  
thou hast power.

Thou know'st, I neither brave nor fear thy rage.  
What has detained me here, that too thou know'st.

[*Taking THEKLA by the hand.*]

See, Duke! All—all would I have owed to thee,  
Would have received from thy paternal hand  
The lot of blessed spirits. This hast thou  
Laid waste for ever—that concerns not thee.

Indifferent thou tramplest in the dust  
Their happiness, who most are thine. The god  
Whom thou dost serve, is no benignant deity.

Like as the blind irreconcilable  
Fierce element, incapable of compact,  
Thy heart's wild impulse only dost thou follow.\*

*Wal.* Thou art describing thy own father's heart.  
The adder! O, the charms of hell o'erpowered me.  
He dwelt within me, to my inmost soul  
Still to and fro he passed, suspected never!  
On the wide ocean, in the starry heaven  
Did mine eyes seek the enemy, whom I  
In my heart's heart had folded! Had I been

\* I have here ventured to omit a considerable number of lines, which it is difficult to believe that Schiller could have written.

To *Ferdinand* what *Octavio* was to me,  
War had I ne'er denounced against him. No,  
I never could have done it. The Emperor was  
My austere master only, not my friend.  
There was already war 'twixt him and me  
When he delivered the Commander's staff  
Into my hands; for there's a natural  
Unceasing war 'twixt cunning and suspicion;  
Peace exists only betwixt confidence  
And faith. Who poisons confidence, he murders  
The future generations.

*Max.*

I will not

Defend my father. Woe is me, I cannot!  
Hard deeds and luckless have ta'en place, one  
crime

Drags after it the other in close link.  
But we are innocent: how have we fallen  
Into this circle of mishap and guilt?  
To whom have we been faithless? Wherefore must  
The evil deeds and guilt reciprocal  
Of our two fathers twine like serpents round us?

Why must our fathers'

Unconquerable hate rend us asunder,  
Who love each other?

*Wal.*

*Max,* remain with me.

Go you not from me, *Max*! Hark! I will tell  
thee—

How when at Prague, our winter quarters, thou  
Wert brought into my tent a tender boy,  
Not yet accustomed to the German winters:

Thy hand was frozen to the heavy colours;  
 Thou wouldst not let them go.—  
 At that time did I take thee in my arms,  
 And with my mantle did I cover thee;  
 I was thy nurse, no woman could have been  
 A kinder to thee; I was not ashamed  
 To do for thee all little offices,  
 However strange to me; I tended thee  
 Till life returned; and when thine eyes first  
                   opened,

I had thee in my arms. Since then, when have I  
 Altered my feelings t'wards thee? Many thousands  
 Have I made rich, presented them with lands;  
 Rewarded them with dignities and honours;  
 Thee have I *loved*: my heart, my self, I gave  
 To thee! They were all aliens: THOU wert  
 Our child and inmate.\* Max! thou canst not  
                   leave me;

It cannot be; I may not, will not think  
 That Max can leave me.

*Max.*

O my God!

*Wal.*

I have

Held and sustained thee from thy tottering child-  
                   hood.

What holy bond is there of natural love,

\* This is a poor and inadequate translation of the affection-  
 ate simplicity of the original:—

Sie alle waren Fremdlinge, du warst  
 Das Kind des Hauses.

Indeed the whole speech is in the best style of Massinger. O  
 ti sic omnia!



What human tie, that does not knit thee to me?  
I love thee, Max! What did thy father for thee,  
Which I too have not done, to the height of duty;  
Go hence, forsake me, serve thy Emperor;  
He will reward thee with a pretty chain  
Of gold; with his ram's fleece will he reward  
thee:

For that the friend, the father of thy youth,  
For that the holiest feeling of humanity,  
Was nothing worth to thee.

*Max.* O God! how can I  
Do otherwise? Am I not forced to do it?  
My oath—my duty—honour—

Wal. How? Thy duty?  
Duty to whom? Who art thou? Max! bethink  
thee

What duties mayst *thou* have? If I am acting  
A criminal part toward the Emperor,  
It is my crime, not thine. Dost thou belong  
To thine own self? Art thou thine own com-  
mander?

Stand'st thou, like me, a freeman in the world,  
That in thy actions thou shouldst plead free  
agency?

On me thou'rt planted, I am thy Emperor;  
To obey *me*, to *belong* to me, this is  
Thy honour, this a law of nature to thee!  
And if the planet, on the which thou liv'st  
And hast thy dwelling, from its orbit starts,  
It is not in thy choice, whether or no

Thou'lt follow it ;—unfelt it whirls thee onward  
 Together with his ring and all his moons.  
 With little guilt stepp'st thou into this contest,  
 Thee will the world not censure, it will praise thee  
 For that thou held'st thy friend more worth to thee  
 Than names and influences more removed.  
 For justice is the virtue of the ruler,  
 Affection and fidelity the subject's.  
 Not every one doth it beseeem to question  
 The far-off high Arcturus. Most securely  
 Wilt thou pursue the nearest duty—let  
 The pilot fix his eye upon the pole-star.

SCENE VII.—*To these enter NEUMANN.*

*Wal.* What now ?

*Neu.* The Pappenheimers are dismounted,  
 And are advancing now on foot, determined  
 With sword in hand to storm the house, and free  
 The Count, their colonel.

*Wal.* [*to TERTSKY.*] Have the cannon planted.  
 I will receive them with chain-shot. [*Exit TERTSKY*  
 Prescribe to me with sword in hand ! Go, Neu-  
 mann !

"Tis my command that they retreat this moment,  
 And in their ranks in silence wait my pleasure.

[*NEUMANN exit. ILLO steps to the window*

*Coun.* Let him go, I entreat thee, let him go.

*Illo.* [*at the window.*] Hell and perdition !

*Wal.* What is it ?

*Illo.* They scale the council-house, the roof's  
uncovered.

They level at this house the cannon—

*Max.* Madmen!

*Illo.* They are making preparations now to fire  
on us.

*Duch. and Coun.* Merciful Heaven!

*Max.* [to WALLENSTEIN.] Let me go to them!

*Wal.* Not a step!

*Max.* [pointing to THEKLA and the DUCHESS.]  
But their life! Thine!

*Wal.* What tidings bring'st thou, Tertsy?

SCENE VIII.—To these TERTSKY (returning.)

*Ter.* Message and greeting from our faithful  
regiments.

Their ardour may no longer be curbed in.  
They intreat permission to commence th' attack,  
And if thou wouldst but give the word of onset,  
They could now charge the enemy in rear,  
Into the city wedge them, and with ease  
O'erpower them in the narrow streets.

*Illo.* O come!

Let not their ardour cool. The soldiery  
Of Butler's corps stand by us faithfully;  
We are the greater number. Let us charge  
them,  
And finish here in Pilsen the revolt.

*Wal.* What? shall this town become a field of  
slaughter,  
And brother killing discord, fire-eyed,  
Be let loose through its streets to roam and rage?  
Shall the decision be delivered over  
To deaf remorseless rage, that hears no leader?  
Here is not room for battle, only for butchery.  
Well, let it be! I have long thought of it,  
So let it burst then! [Turns to MAX.]

Well, how is it with thee?
Wilt thou attempt a heat with me. Away!  
Thou art free to go. Oppose thyself to me.  
Front against front, and lead them to the battle;  
Thou'rt skilled in war, thou hast learned some-  
what under me,
I need not be ashamed of my opponent,  
And never hadst thou fairer opportunity  
To pay me for thy schooling.

*Cous.* Is it then,
Can it have come to this?—What! Cousin!  
Cousin!
Have you the heart?

*Max.* The regiments that are trusted to my care  
I have pledged my troth to bring away from Pilsen  
True to the Emperor, and this promise will I  
Make good, or perish. More than this no duty  
Requires of me. I will not fight against thee,  
Unless compelled; for though an enemy,  
Thy head is holy to me still.

[Two reports of cannon. ILLO and TERTEKY hurry to  
the window.]

*Wal.* What's that?

*Ter.* He falls.

*Wal.* Falls! Who?

*Illo.* Tiefenbach's corps

Discharged the ordnance.

*Wal.* Upon whom?

*Illo.* On Neumann,

Your messenger.

*Wal.* [*starting up.*] Ha! Death and hell! I  
will—

*Ter.* Expose thyself to their blind frenzy?

*Duch. and Coun.* No!

For God's sake, no!

*Illo.* Not yet, my general!

*Coun.* O, hold him! hold him!

*Wal.* Leave me——

*Max.* Do it not!

Not yet! This rash and bloody deed has thrown  
them

Into a frenzy-fit—allow them time——

*Wal.* Away! too long already have I loitered.  
They are emboldened to these outrages,  
Beholding not my face. They shall behold  
My countenance, shall hear my voice——  
Are they not *my* troops? Am I not their General,  
And their long-feared commander! Let me see  
Whether indeed they do no longer know  
That countenance, which was their sun in battle!  
From the balcony (mark!) I show myself  
To these rebellious forces, and at once

Revolt is mounded, and the high-swoln current  
Shrinks back into the old bed of obedience.

[*Exit WALLENSTEIN; ILLO, TERTSKY, and BUTLER follow.*]

SCENE IX.—COUNTESS, DUCHESS, MAX, and THEKLA.

*Coun.* [*to the DUCHESS.*] Let them but see  
him—there is hope, still, sister.

*Duch.* Hope! I have none!

*Max.* [*who during the last scene has been standing at a distance, in a visible struggle of feelings, advances.*] This can I not endure.

With most determined soul did I come hither,  
My purposed action seemed unblamable  
To my own conscience—and I must stand here  
Like one abhorred, a hard inhuman being;  
Yea, loaded with the curse of all I love!  
Must see all whom I love in this sore anguish,  
Whom I with one word can make happy—O!  
My heart revolts within me, and two voices  
Make themselves audible within my bosom.  
My soul's benighted; I no longer can  
Distinguish the right track. O well and truly  
Didst thou say, father, I relied too much  
On my own heart. My mind moves to and fro—  
I know not what to do.

*Coun.* What? you know not?  
Does not your own heart tell you? Oh! then I  
Will tell it you. Your father is a traitor,

A frightful traitor to us—he has plotted  
Against our General's life, has plunged us all  
In misery—and you're his son! 'Tis yours  
To make the *amends*—Make you the son's fide-  
lity

*Outweigh* the father's treason, that the name  
Of Piccolomini be not a proverb  
Of infamy, a common form of cursing  
To the posterity of Wallenstein.

*Max.* Where is that voice of truth which I dare follow?

It speaks no longer in *my* heart. We all  
But utter what our passionate wishes dictate :  
O that an angel would descend from Heaven,  
And scoop for me the right, the uncorrupted,  
With a pure hand from the pure fount of Light.

[His eyes glance on THEKLA

What other angel seek I? To this heart,  
To this unerring heart, will I submit it,  
Will ask thy love, which has the power to bless  
The happy man alone, averted ever  
From the disquieted and guilty—*canst* thou  
Still love me if I stay? Say that thou canst,  
And I am the Duke's—

*Coun.* Think, niece——

*Max.* Think nothing, Thekla!

Speak what thou *feelest*.

*Coun.* Think upon your father.

*Max.* I did not question thee as Friedland's daughter.

Thee, the beloved and unerring god  
Within thy heart, I question. What's at stake?  
Not whether diadem of royalty  
Be to be won or not—that mightst thou *think* on.  
Thy friend, and *his* soul's quiet, are at stake;  
The fortune of a thousand gallant men,  
Who will all follow me; shall I forswear  
My oath and duty to the Emperor?  
Say, shall I send into Octavio's camp  
The parriidal ball? For when the ball  
Has left its cannon, and is on its flight,  
It is no longer a dead instrument!  
It lives, a spirit passes into it,  
The avenging furies seize possession of it,  
And with sure malice guide it the worst way.

*Thekla.* O! Max.—

*Max.* [*interrupting her.*] Nay, not precipitately  
either, *Thekla*.

I understand thee. To thy noble heart,  
The hardest duty might appear the highest.  
The human, not the great part, would I act.  
Ev'n from my childhood to this present hour,  
Think what the Duke has done for me, how  
loved me,  
And think too, how my father has repaid him.  
O likewise the free lovely impulses  
Of hospitality, the pious friend's  
Faithful attachment, these too are a holy  
Religion to the heart; and heavily  
The shudderings of nature do avenge



Themselves on the barbarian that insults them.  
Lay all upon the balance, all—then speak,  
And let thy heart decide it.

*Thek.*

O, thy own

Hath long ago decided. Follow thou

Thy heart's first feeling——

*Coun.*

Oh! ill-fated woman!

*Thek.* Is it possible that that can be the right,  
The which thy tender heart did not at first  
Detect and seize with instant impulse? Go,  
Fulfil thy duty! I should ever love thee.  
Whate'er thou hadst chosen, thou wouldst still have  
acted

Nobly and worthy of thee—but repentance  
Shall ne'er disturb thy soul's fair peace.

*Max.*

Then I

Must leave thee, must part from thee!

*Thek.*

Being faithful

To thine own self, thou art faithful too to me:

If our fates part, our hearts remain united.

A bloody hatred will divide for ever

The houses Piccolomini and Friedland;

But we belong not to our houses—Go!

Quick! quick! and separate thy righteous

curse

From our unholy and unblessed one!

The curse of Heaven lies upon our head:

'Tis dedicate to ruin. Even me

My father's guilt drags with it to perdition.

Mourn not for me:

My destiny will quickly be decided.

[MAX clasps her in his arms in extreme emotion. There is heard from behind the Scene a loud, wild, long continued cry, Vivat FERDINANDUS ! accompanied by warlike instruments. MAX and THEKLA remain without motion in each other's embraces.]

SCENE X.—To these enter TERTSKY.

Coun. [meeting him.] What meant that cry ?  
What was it ?

Ter. All is lost ! [tenance ?]

Coun. What ! they regarded not his coun-

Ter. 'Twas all in vain.

Duch. They shouted Vivat !

Ter. To the Emperor.

Coun. The traitors !

Ter. Nay ! he was not once permitted  
Even to address them. Soon as he began,  
With deafening noise of warlike instruments  
They drowned his words. But here he comes.

SCENE XI.—To these enter WALLENSTEIN, accompanied  
by ILLO and BUTLER.

Wal. [as he enters.] Tertsy !

Ter. My General ?

Wal. Let our regiments hold themselves  
In readiness to march ; for we shall leave  
Pilsen ere evening. [Exit TERTSKY]

But'er !

*But.*

Yes, my General.

*Wal.* The Governor at Egra is your friend  
And countryman. Write to him instantly  
By a post-courier. He must be advised,  
That we are with him early on the morrow.  
You follow us yourself, your regiment with you.

*But.* It shall be done, my General!

*Wal.* [*steps between MAX and THEKLA, who  
have remained in each other's arms during this  
time.*] Part!

*Max.* O God!

[*Cuirassiers enter with drawn swords, and assemble in  
the back-ground. At the same time there are heard  
from below some spirited passages out of the Pappen-  
heim March, which seem to address MAX.*]

*Wal.* [*to the Cuirassiers.*] Here he is, he is at  
liberty : I keep him  
No longer.

[*He turns away, and stands so that MAX cannot pass by  
him nor approach the PRINCESS.*]

*Max.* Thou know'st that I have not yet learnt  
to live

Without thee ! I go forth into a desert,  
Leaving my all behind me. O do not turn  
Thine eyes away from me ! O once more show me  
Thy ever dear and honoured countenance.

[*MAX attempts to take his hand, but is repelled ; he  
turns to the COUNTESS.*]

Is there no eye that has a look of pity for me ?

[*The COUNTESS turns away from him ; he turns to the  
DUCHESS.*]

My mother!

*Duch.* Go where duty calls you. Haply  
The time may come, when you may prove to us  
A true friend, a good angel at the throne  
Of the Emperor.

*Max.* You give me hope; you would not  
Suffer me wholly to despair. No! no!  
Mine is a certain misery—thanks to Heaven  
That offers me a means of ending it.

[*The military music begins again. The Stage fills more  
and more with armed men. MAX sees BUTLER  
and addresses him.*

And you here, Colonel Butler—and will you  
Not follow me? Well, then! remain more faithful  
To your new lord, than you have proved yourself  
To the Emperor. Come, Butler! promise me,  
Give me your hand upon it, that you'll be  
The guardian of his life, its shield, its watchman.  
He is attainted, and his princely head  
Fair booty for each slave that trades in murder.  
Now he doth need the faithful eye of friendship,  
And those whom here I see—

[*Casting suspicious looks on ILLO and BUTLER*

*Illo.* Go—seek for traitors  
In Gallas', in your father's quarters. Here  
Is only one. Away! away! and free us  
From his detested sight! Away!

[*MAX attempts once more to approach THEKLA. WAL-  
LENSTEIN prevents him. MAX stands irresolute  
and in apparent anguish. In the mean time the  
stage fills more and more; and the horns sound from  
below louder, and each time after a shorter interval.*

*Max.* Blow, blow ! O were it but the Swedish  
trumpets,  
And all the naked swords which I see here,  
Were plunged into my breast ! What purpose you ?  
You come to tear me from this place ! Beware,  
Ye drive me not to desperation.—Do it not !  
Ye may repent it !

[*The stage is entirely filled with armed men.*

Yet more ! weight upon weight to drag me down !  
Think what ye're doing. It is not well done  
To choose a man despairing for your leader ;  
You tear me from my happiness. Well, then,  
I dedicate your souls to vengeance. Mark !  
For your own ruin you have chosen me :  
Who goes with me must be prepared to perish.

[*He turns to the back-ground ; there ensues a sudden and violent movement among the Cuirassiers ; they surround him, and carry him off in wild tumult. WALLENSTEIN remains immovable. THEKLA sinks into her mother's arms. The curtain falls. The music becomes loud and overpowering, and passes into a complete war march—the orchestra joins it—and continues during the interval between the second and third Act.*

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Burgomaster's House at Egra.*—BUTLER.

*But.* [*just arrived.*] Here then he is, by his  
destiny conducted.

Here, Friedland! and no farther! From Bohemia  
Thy meteor rose, traversed the sky awhile,  
And here upon the borders of Bohemia  
Must sink.

Thou hast forsworn the ancient colours.  
Blind man! yet trustest to thy ancient fortunes.  
Profaner of the altar and the hearth,  
Against thy Emperor and fellow-citizens  
Thou mean'st to wage the war. Friedland,  
beware—

The evil spirit of revenge impels thee—  
Beware thou, that revenge destroy thee not!

SCENE II.—BUTLER and GORDON.

*Gor.* Is it you?

How my heart sinks! The Duke a fugitive traitor!  
His princely head attainted! O my God!

*But.* You have received the letter which I sent  
you

By a post-courier?—

*Gor.* Yes! and in obedience to it  
Opened the strong-hold to him without scruple.  
For an imperial letter orders me  
To follow your commands implicitly.  
But yet forgive me; when even now I saw  
The Duke himself, my scruples recommenced.  
For truly, not like an attained man,  
Into this town did Friedland make his entrance;  
His wonted majesty beamed from his brow,  
And calm, as in the days when all was right,  
Did he receive from me the accounts of office;  
Tis said, that fallen pride learns condescension:  
But sparing and with dignity the Duke  
Weighed every syllable of approbation,  
As masters praise a servant who has done  
His duty, and no more.

*But.* 'Tis all precisely  
As I related in my letter. Friedland  
Has sold the army to the enemy,  
And pledged himself to give up Prague and Egra.  
On this report the regiments all forsook him,  
The five excepted that belonged to Tertsy,  
And which have followed him as thou hast seen.  
The sentence of attainder is passed on him,  
And every loyal subject is required  
To give him in to justice, dead or living.

*Gor.* A traitor to the Emperor—such a noble!  
Of such high talents! What is human greatness!  
I often said, this can't end happily.

His might, his greatness, and this obscure power,  
Are but a covered pit-fall. The human being  
May not be trusted to self-government.

The clear and written law, the deep trod footmarks  
Of ancient custom, are all necessary  
To keep him in the road of faith and duty.

The authority intrusted to this man  
Was unexampled and unnatural ;  
It placed him on a level with his Emperor,  
Till the proud soul unlearned submission. Woe  
is me ;

I mourn for him ! for where he fell, I deem  
Might none stand firm. Alas ! dear General,  
We in our lucky mediocrity  
Have ne'er experienced, cannot calculate,  
What dangerous wishes such a height may breed  
In the heart of such a man.

*But.* Spare your laments  
Till he need sympathy ; for at this present  
He is still mighty, and still formidable.  
The Swedes advance to Egra by forced marches,  
And quickly will the junction be accomplished.  
This must not be ! The Duke must never leave  
This strong hold on free footing ; for I have  
Pledged life and honour here to hold him prisoner,  
And your assistance 'tis on which I calculate.

*Gor.* O that I had not lived to see this day !  
From his hand I received this dignity,  
He did himself intrust this strong-hold to me,  
Which I am now required to make his dungeon.



We subalterns have no will of our own :  
The free, the mighty man alone may listen  
To the fair impulse of his human nature.

Al ! we are but the poor fools of the law,  
Obedience the sole virtue we dare aim at !

*But.* Nay, let it not afflict you, that your power  
Is circumscribed. Much liberty, much error !  
The narrow path of duty is securest.

*Gor.* And all then have deserted him, you say ?  
He has built up the luck of many thousands ;  
For kingly was his spirit : his full hand  
Was ever open ! Many a one from dust

[ *With a side glance on BUTLER.*

Hath he selected, from the very dust  
Hath raised him into dignity and honour.  
And yet no friend, not one friend hath he pur-  
chased,

Whose heart beats true to him in the evil hour.

*But.* Here's one, I see.

*Gor.* I have enjoyed from him  
No grace or favour. I could almost doubt,  
If ever in his greatness he once thought on  
An old friend of his youth. For still my office  
Kept me at distance from him ; and when first  
He to this citadel appointed me,  
He was sincere and serious in his duty.  
I do not then abuse his confidence,  
If I preserve my fealty in that  
Which to my fealty was first delivered.

*But.* Say, then, will you fulfil the attainder on  
him ?

*Gor.* [*pauses, reflecting, then as in deep dejection.*] If it be so—if all be as you say—  
If he've betrayed the Emperor, his master,  
Have sold the troops, have purposed to deliver  
The strong-holds of the country to the enemy—  
Yea, truly!—there is no redemption for him!  
Yet it is hard, that me the lot should destine  
To be the instrument of his perdition;  
For we were pages at the court of Bergau  
At the same period; but I was the senior.

*But.* I have heard so——

*Gor.* 'Tis full thirty years since then  
A youth who scarce had seen his twentieth year  
Was Wallenstein, when he and I were friends:  
Yet even then he had a daring soul:  
His frame of mind was serious and severe  
Beyond his years: his dreams were of great  
objects.

He walked amidst us of a silent spirit,  
Communing with himself: yet I have known him  
Transported on a sudden into utterance  
Of strange conceptions; kindling into splendour  
His soul revealed itself, and he spake so  
That we looked round perplexed upon each other  
Not knowing whether it were craziness,  
Or whether it were a god that spoke in him.

*But.* But was it where he fell two story high  
From a window-ledge, on which he had fallen  
asleep;  
And rose up free from injury? From this day

(It is reported) he betrayed clear marks  
Of a distempered fancy.

*Gor.*

He became

Doubtless more self-enwrapt and melancholy ;  
He made himself a Catholic. Marvellously  
His marvellous preservation had transformed him.  
Thenceforth he held himself for an exempted  
And privileged being, and, as if he were  
Incapable of dizziness or fall,  
He ran along the unsteady rope of life.  
But now our destinies drove us asunder :  
He paced with rapid step the way of greatness,  
Was Count, and Prince, Duke-regent, and Dictator.

And now is all, all this too little for him ;  
He stretches forth his hands for a king's crown,  
And plunges in unfathomable ruin.

*But.* No more, he comes.

SCENE III.—*To these enter WALLENSTEIN, in conversation with the BURGOMASTER OF EGRA.*

*Wal.* You were at one time a free town. I see,  
Ye bear the half eagle in your city arms.  
Why the *half* eagle only ?

*Burg.*

We were free,

But for these last two hundred years has Egra  
Remained in pledge to the Bohemian crown ;  
Therefore we bear the half eagle, the other half  
Being cancelled till the empire ransom us,

If ever that should be.

*Wal.*

Ye merit freedom.

Only be firm and dauntless. Lend your ears  
To no designing whispering court-minions.  
What may your imposts be ?

*Burg.*

So heavy that

We totter under them. The garrison  
Lives at our costs.

*Wal.*

I will relieve you. Tell me,  
There are some Protestants among you still ?

*[The BURGOMASTER hesitates.]*

Yes, yes ; I know it. Many lie concealed  
Within these walls—Confess now—you yourself—

*[Fixes his eye on him. The BURGOMASTER alarmed.]*

Be not alarmed. I hate the Jesuits.  
Could my will have determined it, they had  
Been long ago expelled the empire. Trust me—  
Mass-book or Bible—'tis all one to me.  
Of that the world has had sufficient proof.  
I built a church for the reformed in Glogau  
At my own instance. Hark'e, Burgomaster !  
What is your name ?

*Burg.*

Pachthalbel, may it please you.

*Wal.* Hark'e !——

But let it go no further, what I now  
Disclose to you in confidence.

*[Laying his hand on the BURGOMASTER'S shoulder, with  
a certain solemnity.]*

The times

Draw near to the fulfilment, Burgomaster !  
The high will fall, the low will be exalted.

Hark'e ! But keep it to yourself ! The end  
Approaches of the Spanish double monarchy—  
A new arrangement is at hand. You saw  
The three moons that appeared at once in the  
Heaven.

*Burg.* With wonder and affright !

*Wal.* Whereof did two  
Strangely transform themselves to bloody daggers,  
And only one, the middle moon, remained  
Steady and clear.

*Burg.* We applied it to the Turks.

*Wal.* The Turks ! That all ?—I tell you, that  
two empires  
Will set in blood, in the East and in the West,  
And Luth'ranism alone remain.

[*Observing GORDON and BUTLER.*  
I'faith,

'Twas a smart cannonading that we heard  
This evening, as we journeyed hitherward ;  
'Twas on our left hand. Did you hear it here ?

*Gor.* Distinctly. The wind brought it from  
the South.

*But.* It seemed to come from Weiden or from  
Neustadt.

*Wal.* 'Tis likely. That's the route the Swedes  
are taking.

How strong is the garrison ?

*Gor.* Not quite two hundred  
Competent men, the rest are invalids. [*Jochim ?*

*Wal.* Good ! And how many in the vale of

*Gor.* Two hundred arquebussiers have I sent  
thither

To fortify the posts against the Swedes.

*Wal.* Good ! I commend your foresight. At  
the works too

You have done somewhat ?

*Gor.* Two additional batteries  
I caused to be run up. They were needed.

The Rhinegrave presses hard upon us, General !

*Wal.* You have been watchful in your Em-  
peror's service.

I am content with you, Lieutenant-Colonel.

[To BUTLER.

Release the outposts in the vale of Jochim

With all the stations in the enemy's route.

[To GORDON.

Governor, in your faithful hands I leave

My wife, my daughter, and my sister. I

Shall make no stay here, and wait but the arrival

Of letters, to take leave of you, together

With all the regiments.

SCENE IV.—*To these enter COUNT TERTSKY.*

*Ter.* Joy, General, joy ! I bring you welcome  
tidings.

*Wal.* And what may they be ?

*Ter.* There has been an engagement  
At Neustadt ; the Swedes gained the victory.

*Wal.* From whence did you receive the intel-  
ligence !

*Ter.* A countryman from Tirschenreit conveyed it.

Soon after sunrise did the fight begin!  
A troop of the Imperialists from Tachau  
Had forced their way into the Swedish camp;  
The cannonade continued full two hours;  
There were left dead upon the field a thousand  
Imperialists, together with their Colonel;  
Further than this he did not know.

*Wal.* How came  
Imperial troops at Neustadt? Altringer,  
But yesterday, stood sixty miles from there.  
Count Gallas' force collects at Frauenberg,  
And have not the full complement. Is it possible,  
That Suys perchance had ventured so far onward?  
It cannot be.

*Ter.* We shall soon know the whole,  
For here comes Illo, full of haste, and joyous.

SCENE V.—*To these enter ILLO.*

*Illo.* [*to WALLENSTEIN.*] A courier, Duke!  
he wishes to speak with thee.

*Ter.* [*eagerly.*] Does he bring confirmation of  
the victory?

*Wal.* [*at the same time.*] What does he bring?  
Whence comes he?

*Illo.* From the Rhinegrave.  
And what he brings I can announce to you

Beforehand. Seven leagues distant are the  
 Swedes;  
 At Neustadt did Max Piccolomini  
 Throw himself on them with the cavalry;  
 A murderous fight took place! o'erpowered by  
 numbers  
 The Pappenheimers all, with Max their leader,  
 [WALLENSTEIN *shudders and turns pale*  
 Were left dead on the field.

*Wal.* [after a pause, in a low voice.] Where is  
 the messenger? Conduct me to him.

[WALLENSTEIN is going, when LADY NECHBRUNN  
*rushes into the room. Some Servants follow her and  
 run across the Stage.*

*Neu.* Help! help!

*Illo and Tertsy.* [at the same time.] What now?

*Neu.* The Princess!

*Wal. and Per.* Does she know it?

*Neu.* [at the same time with them.] She is dying!

[Hurries off the Stage, when WALLENSTEIN  
 and TERTSKY follow her.]

#### SCENE VI.—BUTLER and GORDON.

*Gor.* What's this?

*But.* She has lost the man she loved—

Young Piccolomini, who fell in the battle.

*Gor.* Unfortunate lady!

*But.* You have heard what Illo



Reporteth, that the Swedes are conquerors,  
And marching hitherward.

*Gor.* Too well I heard it.

*But.* They are twelve regiments strong, and  
there are five

Close by us to protect the Duke. We have  
Only my single regiment; and the garrison  
Is not two hundred strong.

*Gor.* 'Tis even so.

*But.* It is not possible with such small force  
To hold in custody a man like him.

*Gor.* I grant it.

*But.* Soon the numbers would disarm us,  
And liberate him.

*Gor.* It were to be feared.

*But.* [*after a pause.*] Know, I am warranty for  
the event;

With my head have I pledged myself for his,  
Must make my word good, cost it what it will,  
And if alive we cannot hold him prisoner,  
Why—death makes all things certain!

*Gor.* Butler! what?  
Do I understand you? Gracious God! *You*  
could—

*But.* He must not live.

*Gor.* And *you* can do the deed!

*But.* Either you or I. This morning was his  
last.

*Gor.* You would assassinate him!—

*But.* 'Tis my purpose.

*Gor.* Who leans with his whole confidence  
upon you!

*But.* Such is his evil destiny!

*Gor.* Your General!

The sacred person of your General!

*But.* My General he *has been*.

*Gor.* That 'tis only

A "*has been*" washes out no villany.

And without judgment passed?

*But.* The execution

Is here instead of judgment.

*Gor.* This were murder,

Not justice. The most guilty should be heard.

*But.* His guilt is clear, the Emperor has passed  
judgment,

And we but execute his will.

*Gor.* We should not

Hurry to realize a bloody sentence.

A word may be recalled, a life can never be.

*But.* De-patch in service pleases sovereigns.

*Gor.* No honest man's ambitious to press for-  
ward

To the hangman's service.

*But.* And no brave man loses

His colour at a daring enterprise.

*Gor.* A brave man hazards life, but not his  
conscience.

*But.* What then? Shall he go forth anew to  
kindle

The inextinguishable flame of war?

*Gor.* Seize him, and hold him prisoner—do not kill him!

*But.* Had not the Emperor's army been defeated,

I might have done so.—But 'tis now past by.

*Gor.* O, wherefore opened I the stronghold to him?

*But.* His destiny and not the place destroys him.

*Gor.* Upon these ramparts, as beseemed a soldier,

I had fallen, defending the Emperor's citadel!

*But.* Yes! and a thousand gallant men have perished.

*Gor.* Doing their duty—that adorns the man! But murder's a black deed, and nature curses it.

*But.* [*brings out a paper.*] Here is the manifesto which commands us

'To gain possession of his person. See—

It is addressed to you as well as me.

Are you content to take the consequences,

If through our fault he escape to the enemy?

*Gor.* I?—Gracious God!

*But.* Take it on yourself.

Let come of it what may, on you I lay it.

*Gor.* O God in heaven!

*But.* Can you advise aught else

Wherewith to execute the Emperor's purpose?

Say if you can. For I desire his fall,

Not his destruction.

*Gor.* Merciful heaven! what must be  
I see as clear as you. Yet still the heart  
Within my bosom beats with other feelings!

*But.* Mine is of harder stuff! Necessity  
In her rough school hath steeled me. And this Illo  
And Tertsy likewise, they must not survive him.

*Gor.* I feel no pang for these. Their own bad  
          hearts  
Impelled them, not the influence of the stars.  
'Twas they who strowed the seeds of evil passions  
In his calm breast, and with officious villany  
Watered and nursed the poisonous plants. May  
          they

Receive their earnest to the uttermost mite!

*But.* And their death shall precede his!  
We meant to have taken them alive this evening  
Amid the merry-making of a feast,  
And kept them prisoners in the citadels.  
But this makes shorter work. I go this instant  
To give the necessary orders.

SCENE VII.—*To these enter ILLO and TERTSKY.*

*Ter.* Our luck is on the turn. To-morrow come  
The Swedes—twelve thousand gallant warriors,  
Illo!

Then straightways for Vienna. Cheerily, friend!  
What! meet such news with such a moody face?

*Illo.* It lies with us at present to prescribe

Laws, and take vengeance on those worthless traitors,

Those skulking cowards that deserted us ;  
One has already done his bitter penance,  
The Piccolomini: be his the fate  
Of all who wish us evil! This flies sure  
To the old man's heart ; he has his whole life long  
Fretted and toiled to raise his ancient house  
From a Count's title to the name of Prince ;  
And now must seek a grave for his only son.

*But.* 'Twas pity though ! A youth of such heroic  
And gentle temp'rament ! The Duke himself,  
'Twas easily seen, how near it went to his heart,

*Illo.* Hark'e, old friend ! That is the very point  
That never pleased me in our General—  
He ever gave the preference to the Italians.  
Yea, at this very moment, by my soul  
He'd gladly see us all dead ten times over,  
Could he thereby recall his friend to life.

*Ter.* Hush, hush ! Let the dead rest ! This  
evening's business  
Is, who can fairly drink the other down—  
Your regiment *Illo !* gives the entertainment.  
Come ! we will keep a merry carnival—  
The night for once be day, and mid full glasses  
Will we expect the Swedish Avantgarde.

*Illo.* Yes, let us be of good cheer for to-day,  
For there's hot work before us, friends. This sword  
Shall have no rest, till it be bathed to the hilt  
In Austrian blood.

*Gor.* Shame, shame ! what talk is this  
My Lord Field Marshal ? wherefore foam you so  
Against your Emperor ?

*But.* Hope not too much  
From this first victory. Bethink you, sirs !  
How rapidly the wheel of Fortune turns ;  
The Emperor still is formidably strong.

*Illo.* The Emperor has soldiers, no commander,  
For this King Ferdinand of Hungary  
Is but a tyro. Gallas ? He's no luck,  
And was of old the ruiner of armies.  
And then this viper, this Octavio,  
Is excellent at stabbing in the back,  
But ne'er meets Friedland in the open field.

*Ter.* Trust me, my friends, it cannot but  
succeed ;  
Fortune, we know, can ne'er forsake the Duke !  
And only under Wallenstein can Austria  
Be conqueror.

*Illo.* The Duke will soon assemble  
A mighty army ; all come crowding, streaming  
To banners dedicate by destiny  
To fame and prosperous fortune. I behold  
Old times come back again, he will become  
Once more the mighty Lord which he has been.  
How will the fools, who've now deserted him,  
Look then ? I can't but laugh to think of them  
For lands will he present to all his friends,  
And like a King and Emperor reward  
True services ; but we've the nearest claims.

You will not be forgotten, Governor ! [*To GORDON.*  
 He'll take you from this nest, and bid you shine  
 In higher station : your fidelity  
 Well merits it.

*Gor.* I am content already,  
 And wish to climb no higher ; where great height is,  
 The fall must needs be great. " Great height,  
 great depth."

*Illo.* Here you have no more business ; for to-

~~tomorrow~~

The Swedes will take possession of the citadel.  
 Come, Tertsy, it is supper-time. What think  
 you?

Say, shall we have the state\* illuminated  
 In honour of the Swede ? And who refuses  
 To do it is a Spaniard and a traitor.

*Ter.* Nay ! Nay ! not that, it will not please  
 the Duke—

*Illo.* What ! we are masters here ; no soul shall  
 dare

Avow himself imperial where we've rule.  
 Gordon ! Good night, and for the last time,  
 take

A fair leave of the place. Send out patrols  
 To make secure, the watch-word may be altered  
 At the stroke of ten ; deliver in the keys  
 To the Duke himself, and then you're quit for  
 ever

Your wardship of the gates, for on to-morrow  
 The Swedes will take possession of the citadel.

[\* Coleridge has here mistaken Stadt (*city*) for Staat (*state*).]

*Ter* [*as he is going, to BUTLER.*] You come,  
though, to the castle?

*But.*

At the right time.

[*Exeunt TERTSKY and ILLO.*]

SCENE VIII.—GORDON and BUTLER.

*Gor.* [*looking after them.*] Unhappy men!  
How free from all foreboding!

They rush into the outspread net of murder  
In the blind drunkenness of victory;  
I have no pity for their fate. This Illo,  
This overflowing and fool-hardy villain,  
That would fain bathe himself in his Emperor's  
blood.

*But.* Do as he ordered you. Send round  
patrols,

Take measures for the citadel's security;  
When they are within I close the castle gate,  
That nothing may transpire.

*Gor.* [*with earnest anxiety.*] Oh! haste not so!  
Nay, stop; first tell me——

*But.* You have heard already,  
To-morrow to the Swedes belongs. This night  
Alone is ours. They make good expedition,  
But we will make still greater. Fare you well.

*Gor.* Ah! your looks tell me nothing good  
Nay, Butler,  
I pray you, promise me!



*But.*                               The sun has set;  
A fateful evening doth descend upon us,  
And brings on their long night! Their evil stars  
Deliver them unarmed into our hands,  
And from their drunken dream of golden fortunes  
The dagger at their heart shall rouse them. Well,  
The Duke was ever a great calculator;  
His fellow-men were figures on his chess-board,  
To move and station as his game required.  
Other men's honour, dignity, good name, [of it:  
Did he shift like pawns, and made no conscience  
Still calculating, calculating still;  
And yet at last his calculation proves  
Erroneous; the whole game is lost; and lo!  
His own life will be found among the forfeits.

*Gor.* O think not of his errors now; remember  
His greatness, his munificence, think on all  
The lovely features of his character,  
On all the noble exploits of his life,  
And let them, like an angel's arm, unseen  
Arrest the lifted sword.

*But.*                               It is too late.  
I suffer not myself to feel compassion,  
Dark thoughts and bloody are my *duty* now:  
  [Grasping GORDON'S hand.  
Gordon! 'Tis not my hatred (I pretend not  
To love the Duke, and have no cause to love him)  
Yet 'tis not now my hatred that impels me  
To be his murderer. 'Tis his evil fate.  
Hostile concurrences of many events

Control and subjugate me to the office.  
 In vain the human being meditates  
 Free action. He is but the wire-worked puppet  
 Of the blind power, which out of his own choice  
 Creates for him a dread necessity.  
 What too would it avail him, if there were  
 A something pleading for him in my heart—  
 Still I must kill him.

*Gor.* If your heart speak to you,  
 Follow its impulse. 'Tis the voice of God.  
 Think you your fortunes will grow prosperous  
 Bedewed with blood—his blood? Believe it not!

*But.* You know not. Ask not! Wherefore  
 should it happen,  
 That the Swedes gained the victory, and hasten  
 With such forced marches hitherward? Fain  
 would I [Gordon!  
 Have given him to the Emperor's mercy—  
 I do not wish his blood—But I must ransom  
 The honour of my word—it lies in pledge—  
 And he must die, or——

[*Passionately grasping GORDON'S hand.*

Listen, then, and know!

I am *dishonoured* if the Duke escape us.

*Gor.* O to save such a man——

*But.* What!

*Gor.* It is worth

A sacrifice.—Come, friend! be noble-minded!  
 Our own heart, and not other men's opinions,  
 Forms our true honour.

*But.* [*with a cold and haughty air.*] He is a great lord,

This Duke—and I am but of mean importance !  
This is what you would say. Wherein concerns it  
The world at large, you mean to hint to me,  
Whether the man of low extraction keeps  
Or blemishes his honour—

So that the man of princely rank be saved.

We all do stamp our value on ourselves.

The price we challenge for ourselves is given us.

There does not live on earth the man so stationed,

That I despise myself compared with him.

Man is made great or little by his own will :

Because I am true to mine, therefore he dies.

*Gor.* I am endeavouring to move a rock.

Thou hadst a mother, yet no human feelings.

I cannot hinder you, but may some god

Rescue him from you !

[*Exit GORDON.*]

SCENE IX.—BUTLER *alone.*

I treasured my good name all my life long ;  
The Duke has cheated me of life's best jewel,  
So that I blush before this poor weak Gordon !  
He prizes above all his fealty ;  
His conscious soul accuses him of nothing ;  
In opposition to his own soft heart  
He subjugates himself to an iron duty.  
Me in a weaker moment passion warped ;  
I stand beside him, and must feel myself

The worst man of the two. What, though the  
world

Is ignorant of my purposed treason, yet

*One* man does know it, and can prove it too—

High-minded Piccolomini!

There lives the man who can dishonour me!

This ignominy blood alone can cleanse!

Duke Friedland, thou or I—Into my own hands

Fortune delivers me—The dearest thing a man  
has is himself.

*The Curtain drops.*

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—BUTLER'S Chamber.

BUTLER, and MAJOR GERALDIN.

*But.* Find me twelve strong dragoons, arm  
them with pikes,

For there must be no firing;—

Conceal them somewhere near the banquet-room,

And soon as the dessert is served up, rush all in

And cry,—Who is loyal to the Emperor?

I will overturn the table—while you attack

Ulo and Tertsy, and despatch them both.

The castle-palace is well barred and guarded,  
That no intelligence of this proceeding  
May make its way to the Duke.—Go instantly;  
Have you yet sent for Captain Devereux  
And the Macdonald?—

*Ger.*

They'll be here anon.

[*Exit GERALDIN*]

*But* Here's no room for delay. The citizens  
Declare for him, a dizzy drunken spirit  
Possesses the whole town. They see in the Duke  
A Prince of peace, a founder of new ages  
And golden times. Arms too have been given out  
By the town-council, and a hundred citizens  
Have volunteered themselves to stand on guard.  
Despatch then be the word. For enemies  
Threaten us from without and from within.

SCENE II.—BUTLER, CAPTAIN DEVEREUX *and*  
MACDONALD.

*Mac.* Here we are, General.

*Dev.* What's to be the watchword?

*But.* Long live the Emperor!

*Both.* [*recoiling.*] How?

*But.* Live the house of Austria!

*Dev.* Have we not sworn fidelity to Friedland?

*Mac.* Have we not marched to this place to  
protect him?

*But.* Protect a traitor, and his country's enemy

*Dev.* Why, yes! in his name you administered  
Our oath.

*Mac.* And followed him yourself to Egra.

*But.* I did it the more surely to destroy him.

*Dev.* So then!

*Mac.* An altered case!

*But.* [to DEVEREUX.] Thou wretched man!  
So easily leav'st thou thy oath and colours?

*Dev.* The devil!—I but followed your example,  
If you could prove a villain, why not we?

*Mac.* We've nought to do with *thinking*—that's  
your business.

You are our General, and give out the orders!  
We follow you, though the track lead to hell.

*But.* [appeased.] Good, then! we know each  
other.

*Mac.* I should hope so.

*Dev.* Soldiers of fortune are we—who bids most,  
He has us.

*Mac.* 'Tis e'en so!

*But.* Well, for the present

Ye must remain honest and faithful soldiers:—

*Dev.* We wish no other.

*But.* Ay, and make your fortunes.

*Mac.* That is still better.

*But.* Listen!

*Both.* We attend.

*But.* It is the Emperor's will and ordinance  
To seize the person of the Prince-Duke Friedland,  
Alive or dead.

*Dev.* It runs so in the letter.

*Mac.* Alive or dead—these were the very words.

*But.* And he shall be rewarded from the State  
In land and gold, who proffers aid thereto.

*Dev.* Ay? That sounds well. The *words* sound  
always well,

That travel hither from the Court. Yes! yes!

We know already what Court-words import.

A golden chain perhaps in sign of favour,

Or an old charger, or a parchment patent,

And such like.—The Prince-Duke pays better.

*Mac.* Yes.

The Duke's a splendid paymaster.

*But.* All over

With that, my friends! His lucky stars are set

*Mac.* And is that certain?

*But.* You have my word for it

*Dev.* His lucky fortunes all past by?

*But.* For ever

He is as poor as we.

*Mac.* As poor as we?

*Dev.* Macdonald, we'll desert him.

*But.* We'll desert him!

Full twenty thousand have done that already;

We must do more, my countrymen! In short—

We—we must kill him.

*Both.* [*starting back.*] Kill him!

*But.* Yes! must kill him

And for that purpose have I chosen you.

*Both.* Us!

*But.* You, Captain Devereux, and thee, Macdonald.

*Dev.* [after a pause.] Choose you some other.

*But.* What? art dastardly?

Thou, with full thirty lives to answer for—

Thou conscientious of a sudden?

*Dev.* Nay,

To assassinate our Lord and General—

*Mac.* To whom we've sworn a soldier's oath—

*But.* The oath

Is null, for Friedland is a traitor.

*Dev.* No, no! It is too bad!

*Mac.* Yes, by my soul!

It is too bad. One has a conscience too—

*Dev.* If it were not our chieftain, who so long  
Has issued the commands, and claim'd our  
duty,—

*But.* Is that the objection?

*Dev.* Were it my own father,  
And the Emperor's service should demand it of me,  
It might be done perhaps—But we are soldiers,  
And to assassinate our chief commander,  
That is a sin, a foul abomination,  
From which no monk or confessor absolves us.

*But.* I am your Pope, and give you absolution.  
Determine quickly!

*Dev.* 'Twill not do!

*Mac.* 'Twon't do.

*But.* Well, off, then! and—send Pestalutz to

ME.



*Dev.* [*hesitates.*] The Pestalutz—

*Mac.* What may you want with him?

*But.* If you reject it, we can find enough—

*Dev.* Nay, if he must fall, we may earn the  
bounty

As well as any other. What think you,  
Brother Macdonald?

*Mac.* Why if he *must* fall,  
And *will* fall, and it can't be otherwise,  
One would not give place to this Pestalutz.

*Dev.* [*after some reflection.*] When do you pur-  
pose he should fall?

*But.* This night;—  
To-morrow will the Swedes be at our gates.

*Dev.* You take upon you all the consequences!

*But.* I take the whole upon me.

*Dev.* And it is  
The Emperor's will, his express absolute will?—  
For we have instances, that folks may like  
The murder, and yet hang the murderer.

*But.* The manifesto says—alive or dead.  
Alive—it is not possible—you see it is not.

*Dev.* Well, dead then! dead! But how can we  
come at him?

The town is fill'd with Tertsy's soldiery.

*Mac.* Ay! and then Tertsy still remains, and  
Illo—

*But.* With these you shall begin—you under-  
stand me?

*Dev.* How? And must they too perish?

*But.* They the first:

*Mac.* Hear, Devereux ! A bloody evening this.

*Dev.* Have you a man for that ? Commission me—

*But.* 'Tis given in trust to Major Geraldin ;

This is a carnival night, and there's a feast  
Given at the castle—there we shall surprise them,  
And hew them down. The Pestalutz, and Lesley  
Have that commission—soon as that is finished—

*Dev.* Hear, General ! It will be all one to you.

Hark'e ! let me exchange with Geraldin.

*But.* 'Twill be the lesser danger with the Duke.

*Dev.* Danger ! The Devil ! What do you think me, General ?

'Tis the Duke's eye, and not his sword, I fear.

*But.* What can his eye do to thee ?

*Dev.* Death and hell !

Thou know'st that I'm no milk-sop, General !

But 'tis not eight days since the Duke did send me  
Twenty gold pieces for this good warm coat

Which I have on ! and then for him to see me  
Standing before him with the pike, his murderer,  
That eye of his looking upon this coat—

Why—why—the devil fetch me ! I'm no milk-sop !

*But.* The Duke presented thee this good warm  
coat,

And thou, a needy wight, hast pangs of conscience  
To run him through the body in return.

A coat that is far better and far warmer

Did the Emperor give to him, the Prince's mantle.

How doth he thank the Emperor? With revolt  
And treason!

*Dev.* That is true. The devil take  
Such thankers! I'll despatch him.

*But.* And would'st quiet  
Thy conscience, thou hast nought to do but simply  
Pull off the coat; so canst thou do the deed  
With light heart and good spirits.

*Dev.* You are right.  
That did not strike me. I'll pull off the coat—  
So there's an end of it.

*Mac.* Yes, but there's another  
Point to be thought of.

*But.* And what's that, Macdonald?

*Mac.* What avails sword or dagger against *him*?  
He is not to be wounded—he is—

*But.* [*starting up.*] What?

*Mac.* Safe against shot, and stab and flash!  
Hard frozen,

Secured, and warranted by the black art!  
His body is impenetrable, I tell you.

*Dev.* In Inglestadt there was just such another;  
His whole skin was the same as steel; at last  
We were obliged to beat him down with gun-  
stocks.

*Mac.* Hear what I'll do.

*Dev.* Well?

*Mac.* In the cloister here  
There's a Dominican, my countryman.  
I'll make him dip my sword and pike for me

In holy water, and say over them

One of his strongest blessings. That's probatum !

Nothing can stand 'gainst that.

*But.* So do, Macdonald !

But now go and select from out the regiment

Twenty or thirty able-bodied fellows,

And let them take the oaths to the Emperor.

Then when it strikes eleven, when the first rounds

Are passed, conduct them silently as may be

To th' house—I will myself be not far off.

*Dev.* But how do we get through Hartschier  
and Gordon,\*

That stand on guard there in the inner chamber ?

*But.* I have made myself acquainted with the  
place.

I lead you through a back door that's defended

By one man only. Me my rank and office

Give access to the Duke at every hour.

I'll go before you—with one poniard-stroke

Cut Hartschier's wind-pipe, and make way for you.

*Dev.* And when we are there, by what means  
shall we gain

The Duke's bed-chamber, without his alarming

The servants of the Court ; for he has here

A numerous company of followers ?

*But.* The attendants fill the right wing ; he  
hates bustle,

And lodges in the left wing quite alone.

*Dev.* Were it well over—hey, Macdonald ? I

Feel qucerly on the occasion, devil knows !

[\* Orig., *Hartschiers und Garden*, i. e. yeomen and guards.]

*Mac.* And I too. 'Tis too great a personage.  
People will hold us for a brace of villains.

*But.* In plenty, honour, splendour—You may  
safely  
Laugh at the people's babble.

*Dev.* If the business  
Squares with one's honour—if that be quite cer-  
tain—

*But.* Set your hearts quite at ease. Ye save  
for Ferdinand  
His Crown and Empire. The reward can be  
No small one.

*Dev.* And 'tis his purpose to dethrone the Em-  
peror?

*But.* Yes!—Yes!—to rob him of his crown and  
life.

*Dev.* And he must fall by the executioner's  
hands,  
Should we deliver him up to the Emperor  
Alive?

*But.* It were his certain destiny.

*Dev.* Well! Well! Come then, Macdonald,  
he shall not  
Lie long in pain.

[*Exeunt BUTLER through one door, MACDONALD and  
DEVEREUX through the other.*]

SCENE III.—A Gothic and gloomy Apartment at the  
DUCHESS FRIEDLAND'S. THEKLA on a seat, pale,  
her eyes closed. The DUCHESS and LADY NEUBRUNN  
busied about her. WALLENSTEIN and the COUNTESS  
in conversation?

Wal. How knew she it so soon?

Coun. She seems to have  
Foreboded some misfortune. The report  
Of an engagement, in the which had fallen  
A colonel of the imperial army, frightened her.  
I saw it instantly. She flew to meet  
The Swedish courier, and with sudden questioning,  
Soon wrested from him the disastrous secret.  
[Too late we missed her, hastened after her,  
We found her lying in his arms, all pale  
And in a swoon.

Wal. A heavy, heavy blow!  
And she so unprepared! Poor child! How is it?  
[Turning to the DUCHESS.  
Is she coming to herself?

Duch. Her eyes are opening.

Coun. She lives.

Thek. [looking around her.] Where am I?

Wal. [steps to her, raising her up in his arms.]  
Come, cheerly, Thekla! be my own brave girl!  
See, there's thy loving mother. Thou art in  
Thy father's arms.

Thek. [standing up.] Where is he? Is he gone?

Duch. Who gone, my daughter?

*Thek.* He—the man who uttered  
That word of misery.

*Duch.* O! think not of it,  
My Thekla!

*Wal.* Give her sorrow leave to talk!  
Let her complain—mingle your tears with hers,  
For she hath suffered a deep anguish; but  
She'll rise superior to it, for my Thekla  
Hath all her father's unsubdued heart.

*Thek.* I am not ill. See, I have power to stand.  
Why does my mother weep? Have I alarmed her?  
It is gone by—I recollect myself—

[*She casts her eyes round the room, as seeking some one.*  
Where is he? Please you, do not hide him from  
me,  
You see I have strength enough: now I will  
hear him.

*Duch.* No, never shall this messenger of evil  
Enter again into thy presence, Thekla!

*Thek.* My father—

*Wal.* Dearest daughter!

*Thek.* I'm not weak—  
Shortly I shall be quite myself again.  
You'll grant me one request?

*Wal.* Name it, my daughter.

*Thek.* Permit the stranger to be called to me,  
And grant me leave, that by myself I may  
Hear his report and question him.

*Duch.* No, never!

*Coun.* 'Tis not advisable—assent not to it.

*Wal.* Hush! Wherefore would'st thou speak  
with him, my daughter?

*Thek.* Knowing the whole I shall be more collected;

I will not be deceived. My mother wishes  
Only to spare me. I will not be spared.

The worst is said already; I can hear  
Nothing of deeper anguish!

*Coun. and Duch.* Do it not.

*Thek.* The horror overpowered me by surprise.  
My heart betrayed me in the stranger's presence;  
He was a witness of my weakness, yea,  
I sank into his arms; and that has shamed me.  
I must replace myself in his esteem,  
And I must speak with him, perforce, that he,  
The stranger, may not think ungently of me.

*Wal.* I see she is in the right, and am inclined  
To grant her this request of hers. Go, call him.

[*LADY NEUBRUNN goes to call him*]

*Duch.* But I, thy mother, will be present—

*Thek.* 'Twere  
More pleasing to me, if alone I saw him:  
Trust me, I shall behave myself the more  
Collectedly.

*Wal.* Permit her her own will.

Leave her alone with him: for there are sorrows,  
Where of necessity the soul must be  
Its own support. A strong heart will rely  
On its own strength alone. In her own bosom,  
Not in her mother's arms, must she collect



The strength to rise superior to this blow.  
It is mine own brave girl. I'll have her treated  
Not as the woman, but the heroine. [Going.

*Coun.* [detaining him.] Where art thou going?

I heard Tertsy say  
That 'tis *thy* purpose to depart from hence  
To-morrow early, but to leave us here.

*Wal.* Yes, ye stay here, placed under the protection

Of gallant men.

*Coun.* O take us with you, brother.  
Leave us not in this gloomy solitude  
To brood o'er anxious thoughts. The mists of  
doubt

Magnify evils to a shape of horror.

*Wal.* Who speaks of evil! I entreat you, sister,  
Use words of better omen.

*Coun.* Then take us with you.  
O leave us not behind you in a place  
That forces us to such sad omens. Heavy  
And sick within me is my heart——  
These walls breathe on me, like a church-yard  
vault.

I cannot tell you, brother, how this place  
Doth go against my nature. Take us with you.  
Come, sister, join you your entreaty!—Niece,  
Yours too. We all entreat you, take us with you

*Wal.* The place's evil omens will I change,  
Making it that which shields and shelters for me  
My best beloved.

*Lady Neu.* [*returning.*] The Swedish officer.

*Wal.* Leave her alone with him. [*Exit.*]

*Duch.* [*to THEKLA, who starts and shivers.*]

There—pale as death! Child, 'tis impossible

That thou shouldst speak with him. Follow thy mother.

*Thek.* The Lady Neubrunn then may stay with me. [*Exeunt DUCHESS and COUNTESS.*]

SCENE IV.—THEKLA, the Swedish Captain, LADY NEUBRUNN.

*Cap.* [*respectfully approaching her.*] Princess  
—I must entreat your gentle pardon—

My inconsiderate rash speech—How could I—

*Thek.* [*with dignity.*] You did behold me in my agony.

A most distressful accident occasioned  
You, from a stranger, to become at once  
My confidant.

*Cap.* I fear you hate my presence,  
For my tongue spake a melancholy word.

*Thek.* The fault is mine. Myself did wrest it from you.

The horror which came o'er me interrupted  
Your tale at its commencement. May it please  
you,  
Continue it to the end.

*Cap.* Princess, 'twill  
Renew your anguish.

*Thek.* I am firm.—  
I *will* be firm. Well—how began the engagement?

*Cap.* We lay, expecting no attack, at Neustadt,  
Entrenched but insecurely in our camp,  
When towards evening rose a cloud of dust  
From the wood thitherward; our vanguard fled  
Into the camp, and sounded the alarm.  
Scarce had we mounted, ere the Pappenheimers,  
Their horses at full speed, broke through the lines,  
And leaped the trenches! but their heedless courage  
Had borne them onward far before the others—  
The infantry were still at distance, only  
The Pappenheimers followed daringly  
Their daring leader.

*THEKLA betrays agitation in her gestures. The Officer  
pauses till she makes a sign to him to proceed.*

Both in van and flanks  
With our whole cavalry we now received them;  
Back to the trenches drove them, where the foot  
Stretched out a solid ridge of pikes to meet them.  
They neither could advance, nor yet retreat;  
And as they stood on every side wedged in,  
The Rhinegrave to their leader called aloud,  
Inviting a surrender; but their leader,  
Young Piccolomini——

[*THEKLA, as giddy, grasps a chair*

Known by his plume,  
 And his long hair, gave signal for the trenches ;  
 Himself leaped first, the regiment all plunged after,  
 His charger, by a halbert gored, reared up,  
 Flung him with violence off, and over him  
 The horses, now no longer to be curbed,——

[THEKLA, who has accompanied the last speech with all  
 the marks of increasing agony, trembles through her  
 whole frame, and is fainting. The LADY NEU-  
 BRUNN runs to her, and receives her in her arms.

Neu. My dearest lady——

Cap.

I retire.

Thek.

'Tis over.

Proceed to the conclusion.

Cap.

While despair

Inspired the troops with frenzy when they saw  
 Their leader perish ; every thought of rescue  
 Was spurned ; they fought like wounded tigers ;  
 their

Frantic resistance roused our soldiery ;  
 A murderous fight took place, nor was the contest  
 Finished before their last man fell.

Thek. [fainting.]

And where——

Where is——You have not told me all.

Cap. [after a pause.]

This morning

We buried him. Twelve youths of noblest birth  
 Did bear him to interment ; the whole army  
 Followed the bier. A laurel decked his coffin ;  
 The sword of the deceased was placed upon it,  
 In mark of honour, by the Rhinegrave's self.

Nor tears were wanting ; for there are among us  
 Many who had themselves experienced  
 The greatness of his mind, and gentle manners ;  
 All were affected at his fate. The Rhinegrave  
 Would willingly have saved him ; but himself  
 Made vain the attempt—'tis said he wished to die.

*Neu.* [*to THEKLA, who has hidden her countenance.*] Look up, my dearest lady——

*Thek.* Where is his grave?

*Cap.* At Neustadt, lady ; in a cloister church  
 Are his remains deposited, until  
 We can receive directions from his father.

*Thek.* What is the cloister's name?

*Cap.* Saint Catharine's.

*Thek.* And how far is it thither?

*Cap.* Near twelve leagues.

*Thek.* And which the way?

*Cap.* You go by Tirschenreit  
 And Falkenberg through our advanced posts.

*Thek.* Who  
 Is their commander?

*Cap.* Colonel Seckendorf.

[*THEKLA steps to the table, and takes a ring from a casket.*]

*Thek.* You have beheld me in my agony,  
 And shown a feeling heart. Please you, accept  
 [Giving him the ring]

A small memorial of this hour. Now go!

*Cap.* Princess——

[*THEKLA silently makes signs to him to go, and turns from him. The Captain lingers, and is about to speak. LADY NEUBRUNN repeats the signal, and he retires.*]

## SCENE V.—THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN.

*Thek.* [*falls on* LADY NEUBRUNN'S *neck.*] Now, gentle Neubrunn, show me the affection Which thou hast ever promised—prove thyself My own true friend and faithful fellow-pilgrim. This night we must away!

*Neu.* Away! and whither?

*Thek.* Whither! There is but one place in the world.

Thither where he lies buried! To his coffin!

*Neu.* What would you do there?

*Thek.* What do there?

That would'st thou not have asked, hadst thou e'er loved.

There, there is all that still remains of him.

That single spot is the whole earth to me.

*Neu.* That place of death——

*Thek.* Is now the only place,

Where life yet dwells for me: detain me not!

Come and make preparations: let us think

Of means to fly from hence.

*Neu.* Your father's rage——

*Thek.* That time is past——

And now I fear no human being's rage.

*Neu.* The sentence of the world! the tongue of calumny!

*Thek.* Whom am I seeking? Him who is no more.

Am I then hastening to the arms——O God !

I haste but to the grave of the beloved.

*Neu.* And we alone, two helpless feeble women?

*Thek.* We will take weapons : my arms shall  
protect thee.

*Neu.* In the dark night-time?

*Thek.* Darkness will conceal us.

*Neu.* This rough tempestuous night——

*Thek.* Had he a soft bed

Under the hoofs of his war-horses?

*Neu.* Heaven !

And then the many posts of the enemy !——

*Thek.* They are human beings. Misery travels  
free

Through the whole earth.

*Neu.* The journey's weary length——

*Thek.* The pilgrim travelling to a distant shrine  
Of hope and healing, doth not count the leagues.

*Neu.* How can we pass the gates?

*Thek.* Gold opens them.

Go, do but go.

*Neu.* Should we be recognized——

*Thek.* In a despairing woman, a poor fugitive,  
Will no one seek the daughter of Duke Friedland.

*Neu.* And where procure we horses for our  
flight?

*Thek.* My equerry procures them. Go and  
fetch him.

*Neu.* Dares he, without the knowledge of his  
lord?

*Thek.* He will. Go, only go. Delay no longer.

*Neu.* Dear lady! and your mother?

*Thek.* Oh! my mother!

*Neu.* So much as she has suffered too already;  
Your tender mother—Ah! how ill prepared  
For this last anguish!

*Thek.* Woe is me! my mother!  
[*Pauses.*]

Go instantly.

*Neu.* But think what you are doing!

*Thek.* What *can* be thought, already has been  
thought.

*Neu.* And being there, what purpose you to do?

*Thek.* There a divinity will prompt my soul.

*Neu.* Your heart, dear lady, is disquieted!  
And this is not the way that leads to quiet.

*Thek.* To a deep quiet, such as he has found.  
It draws me on, I know not what to name it,  
Resistless does it draw me to his grave.  
There will my heart be eased, my tears will flow,  
O hasten, make no further questioning!  
There is no rest for me till I have left  
These walls—they fall in on me—A dim power  
Drives me from hence—Oh mercy! What a  
feeling!  
What pale and hollow forms are those! They fill,  
They crowd the place! I have no longer room  
here!  
Mercy! Still more! More still! The hideous  
swarm!



They press on me; they chase me from these  
walls—

Those hollow, bodiless forms of living men!

*Neu.* You frighten me so, lady, that no longer  
I dare stay here myself. I go and call  
Rosenberg instantly. [*Exit* LADY NEUBRUNN.

#### SCENE VI.

*Thek.* His spirit 'tis that calls me: 'tis the troop  
Of his true followers, who offered up  
Themselves t'avenge his death: and they accuse

III

Of an ignoble loitering—*they* would not  
Forsake their leader even in his death—*they* died  
for him!

And shall *I* live?——

For me too was that laurel-garland twined  
That decks his bier. Life is an empty casket:  
I throw it from me. O! my only hope;—  
To die beneath the hoofs of trampling steeds—  
That is the lot of heroes upon earth!

[*Exit* THEKLA

*The Curtain drops.*

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Saloon, terminated by a gallery which extends far into the back-ground. WALLENSTEIN sitting at a table. The Swedish Captain standing before him.*

*Wal.* Commend me to your lord. I sympathize  
In his good fortune; and if you have seen me  
Deficient in the expressions of that joy,  
Which such a victory might well demand,  
Attribute it to no lack of good will,  
For henceforth are our fortunes one. Farewell,  
And for your trouble take my thanks. To-morrow  
The citadel shall be surrendered to you  
On your arrival.

*[The Swedish Captain retires. WALLENSTEIN sits lost in thought, his eyes fixed vacantly, and his head sustained by his hand. The COUNTESS TERTSKY enters, stands before him awhile, unobserved by him; at length he starts, sees her, and recollects himself.]*

*Wal.* Com'st thou from her? Is she restored?  
How is she?

*Coun.* My sister tells me, she was more collected

After her conversation with the Swede.  
She has now retired to rest.

*Wal.* The pang will soften,  
She will shed tears.

*Coun.* I find thee altered too,  
 My brother! After such a victory  
 I had expected to have found in thee  
 A cheerful spirit. O remain *thou* firm!  
 Sustain, uphold us! For our light *thou art*,  
 Our sun.

*Wal.* Be quiet. I ail nothing. Where's  
 Thy husband?

*Coun.* At a banquet—he and Illo.

*Wal.* [*rises, and strides across the room.*] The  
 night's far spent. Betake thee to thy  
 chamber.

*Coun.* Bid me not go, O let me stay with thee!

*Wal.* [*moves to the window.*] There is a busy  
 motion in the heaven,  
 The wind doth chase the flag upon the tower,  
 Fast sweep the clouds, the sickle \* of the moon,  
 Struggling, darts snatches of uncertain light.

\* These four lines are expressed in the original with exquisite felicity,

Am Himmel ist geschäftige Bewegung,  
 Des Thurmes Fahne jagt der Wind, schnell geht  
 Der Wolken Zug, die *Mondessichel wankt*,  
 Und durch die Nacht zuckt ungewisse Helle.

The word "moon-sickle" reminds me of a passage in Harris, as quoted by Johnson, under the word "falcated." "The enlightened part of the moon appears in the form of a sickle or reaping-hook, which is while she is moving from the conjunction to the opposition, or from the new moon to the full; but from full to a new again, the enlightened part appears gibbous, and the dark *falcated*."

The words "wanken" and "schweben" are not easily translated. The English words, by which we attempt to

No form of star is visible ! That one  
 White stain of light, that single glimmering yonder,  
 Is from Cassiopeia, and therein  
 Is Jupiter. [*A pause.*] But now  
 The blackness of the troubled element hides him !

*[He sinks into profound melancholy, and looks vacantly  
 into the distance.]*

*Coun.* [*looks on him mournfully, then grasps  
 his hand.*] What art thou brooding on ?

*Wal.*

*Methinks*

If but I saw him, 'twould be well with me.

*He is the star of my nativity,*

*And often marvellously hath his aspect*

*Shot strength into my heart.*

*Coun.*

*Thou'lt see him again.*

*Wal.* [*remains for a while with absent mind,  
 then assumes a livelier manner, and turns sudden-  
 ly to the COUNTESS.*] See him again ? O never,  
 never again.

*Coun.* How ?

*Wal.*

*He is gone—is dust.*

*Coun.*

*Whom meanest thou then ?*

*Wal.* He, the more fortunate ! yea, he hath  
 finished !

*For him there is no longer any future,*

*His life is bright—bright without spot it was*

*And cannot cease to be. No ominous hour*

*tender them, are either vulgar or pedantic, or not of suffi-  
 ciently general application. So "der Wolken Zug"—the  
 draft, the procession of clouds.—The masses of the clouds  
 sweep onward in swift stream.*

Knocks at his door with tidings of mishap.  
Far off is he, above desire and fear ;  
No more submitted to the change and chance  
Of the unsteady planets. O 'tis well  
With *him* ! but who knows what the coming hour  
Veil'd in thick darkness brings for us !

*Coun.* Thou speak'st  
Of Piccolomini. What was his death ?  
The courier had just left thee as I came.

[WALLENSTEIN by a motion of his hand makes signs to  
her to be silent.

Turn not thine eyes upon the backward view,  
Let us look forward into sunny days,  
Welcome with joyous heart the victory,  
Forget what it has cost thee. Not to-day,  
For the first time, thy friend was to thee dead ;  
To thee he died, when first he parted from thee.

*Wal.* I shall grieve down this blow, of that I'm  
conscious :

What does not man grieve down ? From the  
highest,

As from the vilest thing of every day  
He learns to wean himself ; for the strong hours  
Conquer him. Yet I feel what I have lost  
In him. The bloom is vanished from my life.  
For O ! he stood beside me, like my youth,  
Transformed for me the real to a dream,  
Clothing the palpable and familiar  
With golden exhalations of the dawn.  
Whatever fortunes wait my future toils,

The *beautiful* is vanished—and returns not.

*Coun.* O be not treacherous to thy own power.  
Thy heart is rich enough to vivify  
Itself. Thou lov'st and prizest virtues in him,  
The which thyself didst plant, thyself unfold.

*Wal.* [*stepping to the door.*] Who interrupts us  
now at this late hour?  
It is the Governor. He brings the keys  
Of the Citadel. 'Tis midnight. Leave me, sister!

*Coun.* O 'tis so hard to me this night to leave  
thee—  
A boding fear possesses me!

*Wal.* Fear! Wherefore?  
*Coun.* Should'st thou depart this night, and we  
at waking  
Never more find thee!

*Wal.* Fancies!  
*Coun.* O my soul  
Has long been weighed down by these dark fore-  
bodings.

And if I combat and repel them waking,  
They still rush down upon my heart in dreams.  
I saw thee yesternight with thy first wife  
Sit at a banquet gorgeously attired.

*Wal.* This was a dream of favourable omen,  
That marriage being the founder of my fortunes.

*Coun.* To-day I dreamed that I was seeking  
thee

In thy own chamber. As I entered, lo!  
It was no more a chamber;—the *Chartreuse*

At Gitschin 'twas, which thou thyself hast founded,  
And where it is thy will that thou shouldst be  
Interred.

*Wal.* Thy soul is busy with these thoughts.

*Coun.* What! dost thou not believe that oft in  
dreams

A voice of warning speaks prophetic to us?

*Wal.* There is no doubt that there exists such  
voices.

Yet I would not call *them*

Voices of warning that announce to us

Only the inevitable. As the sun,

Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image

In the atmosphere, so often do the spirits

Of great events stride on before the events,

And in to-day already walks to-morrow.

That which we read of the fourth Henry's death

Did ever vex and haunt me like a tale

Of my own future destiny. The king

Felt in his breast the phantom of the knife,

Long ere Ravallac armed himself therewith.

His quiet mind forsook him : the phantasma

Started him in his Louvre, chased him forth

Into the open air : like funeral knells

Sounded that coronation festival :

And still with boding sense he heard the tread

Of those feet that even then were seeking him

Throughout the streets of Paris,

*Coun.*

And to *thee*

The voice within thy soul bodes nothing?

*Wal.*

Nothing.

Be wholly tranquil.

*Coun.*

And another time

I hastened after thee, and thou ran'st from me  
Through a long suite, through many a spacious  
hall,

There seemed no end of it: doors creaked and  
clapped:

I followed panting, but could not o'ertake thee;  
When on a sudden did I feel myself  
Grasped from behind—the hand was cold that  
grasped me—

'Twas thou, and thou didst kiss me, and there  
seemed

A crimson covering to envelope us.

*Wal.* That is the crimson tapestry of my chamber.

*Coun.* [*gazing on him.*] If it should come to  
that—if I should see thee,

Who standest now before me in the fulness

Of life—

[*She falls on his breast and weeps.*]

*Wal.* The Emperor's proclamation weighs upon  
thee—

Alphabets wound not—and he finds no hands.

*Coun.* If he should find them, my resolve is  
taken—

I bear about me my support and refuge.

[*Exit COUNTESS*]



## SCENE II.—WALLENSTEIN, GORDON.

*Wal.* All quiet in the town?

*Gor.* The town is quiet.

*Wal.* I hear a boisterous music, and the Castle  
Is lighted up. Who are the revellers?

*Gor.* There is a banquet given at the Castle  
To the Count Tertsy, and Field Marshal Illo.

*Wal.* In honor of the victory.—This tribe  
Can show their joy in nothing else but feasting.

[*Rings. The Groom of the Chamber enters.*  
Unrobe me, I will lay me down to sleep.

[*WALLENSTEIN takes the keys from GORDON.*  
So we are guarded from all enemies,

And shut in with sure friends.

For all must cheat me, or a face like this

[*Fixing his eye on GORDON*  
Was ne'er a hypocrite's mask.

[*The Groom of the Chamber takes off his mantle, collar, and scarf.*

*Wal.* Take care—what is that?

*Groom of the Chamber.* The golden chain is  
snapped in two.

*Wal.* Well, it has lasted long enough. Here—  
give it. [*He takes and looks at the chain*

'Twas the first present of the Emperor.

He hung it round me in the war of Friùle,

He being then Archduke; and I have worn it

Till now from habit——

From superstition if you will. Belike,

It was to be a talisman to me,  
 And while I wore it on my neck in faith,  
 It was to chain to me all my life long,  
 The volatile fortune, whose first pledge it was.  
 Well, be it so! Henceforward a new fortune  
 Must spring up for me! for the potency  
 Of this charm is dissolved.

[Groom of the Chamber retires with the vestments.  
 WALLENSTEIN rises, takes a stride across the  
 Room, and stands at last before GORDON in a pos-  
 ture of meditation.]

How the old time returns upon me! I  
 Behold myself once more at Burgau, where  
 We two were pages of the Court together.  
 We oftentimes disputed: thy intention  
 Was ever good; but thou wert wont to play  
 The moralist and preacher, and would'st rail at  
 me—

That I strove after things too high for me,  
 Giving my faith to bold unlawful dreams,  
 And still extol to me the golden mean.  
 —Thy wisdom hath been proved a thriftless friend  
 To thy own self. See, it has made thee early  
 A superannuated man, and (but  
 That my munificent stars will intervene)  
 Would let thee in some miserable corner  
 Go out like an untended lamp.

Gor.

My Prince!

With light heart the poor fisher moors his boat,  
 And watches from the shore the lofty ship

Stranded amid the storm.

*Wal.*

Art thou already

In harbour then, old man? Well! I am not.

The unconquered spirit drives me o'er life's billows;

My planks still firm, my canvas swelling proudly,  
Hope is my goddess still, and youth my inmate;  
And while we stand thus front to front, almost  
I might presume to say, that the swift years  
Have passed by powerless o'er my unblanched hair.

*[He moves with long strides across the Saloon, and remains on the opposite side over against GORDON.]*

Who now persists in calling Fortune false?  
To me she has proved faithful, with fond love  
Took me from out the common ranks of men,  
And like a mother goddess with strong arm  
Carried me swiftly up the steps of life.  
Nothing is common in my destiny,  
Nor in the furrows of my hand. Who dares  
Interpret then my life for me as 'twere  
One of the undistinguishable many?  
True, in this present moment I appear  
Fall'n low indeed; but I shall rise again.  
The high flood will soon follow on this ebb;  
The fountain of my fortune, which now stops  
Repressed and bound by some malicious star,  
Will soon in joy play forth from all its pipes.

*Gor.* And yet remember I the good old proverb  
"Let the night come before we praise the day."

I would be slow from long continued fortune  
 To gather hope : for hope is the companion  
 Given to the unfortunate by pitying Heaven.  
 Fear hovers round the head of prosperous men ;  
 For still unsteady are the scales of fate. [of old

*Wal.* [smiling.] I hear the very Gordon that  
 Was wont to preach to me, now once more  
 preaching ;

I know well, that all sublunary things  
 Are still the vassals of vicissitude.  
 The unpropitious gods demand their tribute.  
 This long ago the ancient Pagans knew :  
 And therefore of their own accord they offered  
 To themselves injuries, so to atone  
 The jealousy of their divinities :  
 And human sacrifices bled to Typhon.

[After a pause, serious, and in a more subdued manner

I too have sacrificed to him—For me  
 There fell the dearest friend, and through my  
 fault

He fell ! No joy from favourable fortune  
 Can outweigh the anguish of this stroke.  
 The envy of my destiny is glutted :  
 Life pays for life. On his pure head the lightning  
 Was drawn off which would else have shattered me.

SCENE III.—*To these enter SENI.*

*Wal.* Is not that Seni ? and beside himself,  
 If one may trust his looks ! what brings thee  
 hither

At this late hour, Baptista ?

*Seni.* Terror, Duke !

On thy account.

*Wal.* What now ?

*Seni.* Flee ere the day-break !

Trust not thy person to the Swedes !

*Wal.* What now

Is in thy thoughts ?

*Seni.* [*with louder voice.*] Trust not thy person  
to these Swedes !

*Wal.* What is it then ?

*Seni.* [*still more urgently.*] O wait not the ar-  
rival of these Swedes !

An evil near at hand is threatening thee

From false friends. All the signs stand full of  
horror !

Near, near at hand the net-work of perdition—

Yea, even now 'tis being cast around thee !

*Wal.* Baptista, thou art dreaming!—Fear be-  
fools thee. [me.]

*Seni.* Believe not that an empty fear deludes  
Come, read it in the planetary aspects ;  
Read it thyself, that ruin threatens thee  
From false friends !

*Wal.* From the falseness of my friends  
Has risen the whole of my unprosperous fortunes.  
The warning should have come before ! At pre-  
sent

I need no revelation from the stars

To know that.

*Seni.* Come and see ! trust thine own eyes

A fearful sign stands in the house of life—

An enemy ; a fiend lurks close behind

The radiance of thy planet—O be warned !

Deliver not thyself up to these heathens

To wage a war against our holy church.

*Wal. [laughing gently.]* The oracle rails that  
way ! Yes, yes ! Now

I recollect. This junction with the Swedes

Did never please thee—lay thyself to sleep,

Baptista ! Signs like these I do not fear.

*Gor. [who during the whole of this dialogue  
has shown marks of extreme agitation, and now  
turns to WALLENSTEIN.]* My Duke and General !

May I dare presume ?

*Wal.* Speak freely.

*Gor.* What if 'twere no mere creation  
Of fear, if God's high providence vouchsafed  
To interpose its aid for your deliverance,  
And made that mouth its organ.

*Wal.* You're both feverish !  
How can mishap come to me from the Swedes ?  
They sought this junction with me—'tis their in-  
terest.

*Gor. [with difficulty suppressing his emotion.]*

But what if the arrival of these Swedes—  
What if this were the very thing that winged  
The ruin that is flying to your temples ?

*[Flings himself at his feet]*

There is yet time, my Prince.

*Seni.*

O hear him ! hear him !

*Gor.* [*rises.*] The Rhinegrave's still far off.

Give but the orders,

This citadel shall close its gates upon him.

If then he will besiege us, let him try it.

But this I say ; he'll find his own destruction

With his whole force before these ramparts, sooner

Than weary down the valour of our spirit.

He shall experience what a band of heroes,

Inspirited by an heroic leader,

Is able to perform. And if indeed

It be thy serious wish to make amends

For that which thou hast done amiss,—this, this

Will touch and reconcile the Emperor.

Who gladly turns his heart to thoughts of mercy,

And Friedland, who returns repentant to him,

Will stand yet higher in his Emperor's favour,

Than e'er he stood when he had never fallen.

*Wal.* [*contemplates him with surprise, remains silent awhile, betraying strong emotion.*] Gordon—

your zeal and fervour lead you far.

Well, well—an old friend has a privilege.

Blood, Gordon, has been flowing. Never, never

Can the Emperor pardon me : and if he could,

Yet I—I ne'er could let myself be pardoned.

Had I foreknown what now has taken place,

That he, my dearest friend would fall for me,

My first death-offering : and had the heart

Spoken to me, as now it has done—Gordon,

It may be I might have bethought myself.

It may be too, I might not. Might or might not,

Is now an idle question. All too seriously  
Has it begun to end in nothing, Gordon!  
Let it then have its course.

*[Stepping to the window.*

All dark and silent—at the castle too  
All is now hushed—Light me Chamberlain!

*[The Groom of the Chamber, who had entered during the last dialogue, and had been standing at a distance and listening to it with visible expressions of the deepest interest, advances in extreme agitation, and throws himself at the DUKE'S feet.*

And thou too! But I know why thou dost wish  
My reconciliation with the Emperor.  
Poor man! he hath a small estate in Cärnthen,  
And fears it will be forfeited because  
He's in my service. Am I then so poor,  
That I no longer can indemnify  
My servants. Well! To no one I employ  
Means of compulsion. If 'tis thy belief  
That fortune has fled from me, go! Forsake me.  
This night for the last time mayst thou unrobe me,  
And then go over to thy Emperor.  
Gordon, good night! I think to make a long  
Sleep of it: for the struggle and the turmoil  
Of this last day or two were great. May't please  
you!

Take care that they awake me not too early.

*[Exit WALLENSTEIN, the Groom of the Chamber lighting him. SENI follows, GORDON remains on the darkened Stage, following the DUKE with his eye till he disappears at the further end of the gallery. then by his gestures the old man expresses the depth of his anguish, and stands leaning against a pillar.*



SCENE IV.—GORDON, BUTLER (*at first behind the scenes.*)

*But.* [*not yet come into view of the stage.*]

Here stand in silence till I give the signal.

*Gor.* [*starts up.*] 'Tis he, he has already  
brought the murderers.

*But.* The lights are out. All lies in profound  
sleep.

*Gor.* What shall I do, shall I attempt to save  
him?

Shall I call up the house? Alarm the guards?

*But.* [*appears, but scarcely on the stage.*] A  
light gleams hither from the corridor.

It leads directly to the Duke's bed-chamber.

*Gor.* But then I break my oath to the Empe-  
ror;

If he escape and strengthen the enemy,  
Do I not hereby call down on my head  
All the dread consequences?

*But.* [*stepping forward.*] Hark! Who speaks  
there?

*Gor.* 'Tis better, I resign it to the hands  
Of Providence. For what am I, that I  
Should take upon myself so great a deed?  
I have not murdered him, if he be murdered;  
But all his rescue were *my* act and deed;  
*Mine*—and whatever be the consequences,  
I must sustain them.

*But.* [*advances.*] I should know that voice.

Gor. Butler !

But. 'Tis Gordon. What do you want here ?  
Was it so late then when the Duke dismissed you ?

Gor. Your hand bound up and in a scarf ?

But. 'Tis wounded.  
That Illo fought as he was frantic, till  
At last we threw him on the ground.

Gor. [*shuddering.*] Both dead ?

But. Is he in bed ?

Gor. Ah, Butler !

But. Is he ? speak.

Gor. He shall *not* perish ! not through you !  
The Heaven

Refuses your arm. See—'tis wounded !—

But. There is no need of my arm.

Gor. The most guilty  
Have perished, and enough is given to justice.

[*The Groom of the Chamber advances from the gallery  
with his finger on his mouth commanding silence.*]

He sleeps ! O murder not the holy sleep !

But. No ! he shall die awake. [*is going.*]

Gor. His heart still cleaves  
To earthly things : he's not prepared to step  
Into the presence of his God !

But. [*going.*] God's merciful !

Gor. [*holds him.*] Grant him but this night's  
respite.

But. [*hurrying off.*] The next moment  
May ruin all.

Gor. [*holds him still.*] One hour!—

But. Unhold me! What  
Can that short respite profit him?

Gor. O—Time  
Works miracles. In one hour many thousands  
Of grains of sand run out; and quick as they,  
Thought follows thought within the human soul.  
Only one hour! *Your heart may change its pur-*  
pose,

*His heart may change its purpose—some new*  
tidings  
May come: some fortunate event, decisive;  
May fall from Heaven and rescue him. O what  
May not one hour achieve!

But. You but remind me,  
How precious every minute is!  
[*He stamps on the floor.*]

SCENE V.—*To these enter MACDONALD and DEVEREUX,  
with the Halberdiers.*

Gor. [*throwing himself between him and them.*]  
No, monster!  
First over my dead body thou shalt tread.  
I will not live to see the accursed deed!

But. [*forcing him out of the way.*] Weak-  
hearted dotard!

[*Trumpets are heard in the distance.*]

Dev. and Mac. Hark! the Swedish trumpets!

The Swedes before the ramparts! Let us hasten!

*Gor.* [*rushes out.*] O God of Mercy!

*But.* [*calling after him.*] Governor to your post!

*Groom of the Chamber.* [*hurries in.*] Who dares make larum here? Hush! The Duke sleeps.

*Dev.* [*with loud harsh voice.*] Friend, it is time now to make larum.

*Groom of the Chamber.* Help!

Murder!

*But.* Down with him!

*Groom of the Chamber.* [*run through the body by DEVEREUX, falls at the entrance of the gallery.*] Jesus Maria!

*But.* Burst the doors open!

[*They rush over the body into the gallery—two doors are heard to crash one after the other—Voices decadened by the distance—Clash of arms—then all at once a profound silence.*]

#### SCENE VI.—COUNTESS TERTSKY (*with a light.*)

Her bed-chamber is empty; she herself is nowhere to be found! The Neubrunn too, Who watched by her, is missing. If she should Be flown—But whither flown? We must call up Every soul in the house. How will the Duke Bear up against these worst bad tidings? O

If that my husband now were but returned  
Home from the banquet: Hark! I wonder  
whether

The Duke is still awake! I thought I heard  
Voices and tread of feet here! I will go  
And listen at the door. Hark! What is that?  
'Tis hastening up the steps!

## SCENE VII.—COUNTESS, GORDON.

*Gor.* [*rushes in out of breath.*] 'Tis a mistake,  
'Tis not the Swedes—Ye must proceed no fur-  
ther—

Butler! O God! Where is he?

[*Then observing the* COUNTESS.

Countess! Say——

*Coun.* You are come then from the castle?  
Where's my husband?

*Gor.* [*in an agony of affright.*] Your husband!  
—Ask not!—To the Duke——

*Coun.* Not till

You have discovered to me——

*Gor.* On this moment  
Does the world hang. For God's sake! to the  
Duke.

While we are speaking—— [*Calling loudly*

Butler! Butler! God!

*Coun.* Why, he is at the castle with my husband.

[*BUTLER comes from the gallery*

*Gor.* 'Twas a mistake—'Tis not the Swedes—  
it is

The Imperialists' Lieutenant-General  
Has sent me hither, will be here himself  
Instantly.—You must not proceed.

*But.* *He comes*

Too late. [*GORDON dashes himself against the wall.*]

*Gor.* O God of mercy!

*Coun.* What, too late?

Who will be here himself? Octavio  
In Egra? Treason! Treason! Where's the  
Duke? [*She rushes to the gallery.*]

SCENE VIII.—*Servants run across the Stage full of terror.*  
*The whole Scene must be spoken entirely without pauses.*

*Seni.* [*from the gallery.*] O bloody frightful  
deed!

*Coun.* What is it, Seni?

*Page.* [*from the gallery.*] O piteous sight!

[*Other Servants hasten in with torches.*]

*Coun.* What is it? For God's sake!

*Seni.* And do you ask?

Within the Duke lies murdered—and your hus-  
band

Assassinated at the Castle.

[*The COUNTESS stands motionless.*]

*Female Servant.* [*rushing across the Stage.*]

Help! Help! the Duchess!

*Burgomaster.* [*enters.*] What mean these confused

Loud cries, that wake the sleepers of this house?

*Gor.* Your house is cursed to all eternity.

In your house doth the Duke lie murdered!

*Bur.* [*rusthing out.*] Heaven forbid!

*1st Ser.* Fly! fly! they murder us all!

*2d Ser.* [*carrying silver plate.*] That way!  
The lower

Passages are blocked up.

*Voice from behind the Scene.* Make room for  
the Lieutenant-General!

[*At these words the COUNTESS starts from her stupor,  
collects herself, and retires suddenly.*]

*Voice from behind the Scene.* Keep back the  
people! Guard the door.

SCENE IX.—*To these enters OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI with  
all his train. At the same time DEVEREUX and MAC-  
DONALD enter from out the Corridor with the Halberdiers.  
WALLENSTEIN'S dead body is carried over the back part  
of the Stage, wrapped in a piece of crimson tapestry.*

*Oct.* [*entering abruptly.*] It must not be! It  
is not possible!

Butler! Gordon!

I'll not believe it. Say no!

[*GORDON, without answering, points with his hand to the  
body of WALLENSTEIN as it is carried over the  
back of the Stage. OCTAVIO looks that way, and  
stands overpowered with horror.*]

*Dev.* [to BUTLER.] Here is the golden fleece—  
the Duke's sword—

*Mac.* Is it your order—

*But.* [pointing to OCTAVIO.] Here stands he  
who now

Hath the sole power to issue orders.

[DEVEREUX and MACDONALD retire with marks of  
obedience. One drops away after the other, till only  
BUTLER, OCTAVIO, and GORDON remain on the  
Stage.]

*Oct.* [turning to BUTLER.] Was that my pur-  
pose, Butler, when we parted?

O God of Justice!

To thee I lift my hand! I am not guilty  
Of this foul deed.

*But.* Your hand is pure. You have  
Availed yourself of mine.

*Oct.* Merciless man!  
Thus to abuse the orders of thy Lord—  
And stain thy Emperor's holy name with murder,  
With bloody, most accursed assassination!

*But.* [calmly.] I've but fulfilled the Emperor's  
own sentence.

*Oct.* O curse of kings,  
Infusing a dread life into their words,  
And linking to the sudden transient thought  
The unchangeable irrevocable deed.  
Was there necessity for such an eager  
Despatch? Couldst thou not grant the merciful  
A time for mercy? Time is man's good angel.



To leave no interval between the sentence,  
And the fulfilment of it, doth beseech  
God only, the immutable !

*But.*

*For what*

Rail you against me ? What is my offence ?  
The Empire from a fearful enemy  
Have I delivered, and expect reward.  
The single difference 'twixt you and me  
Is this : you placed the arrow in the bow,  
I pulled the string. You sowed blood, and yet  
stand

Astonished that blood is come up. I always  
Knew what I did, and therefore no result  
Hath power to frighten or surprise my spirit.  
Have you aught else to order ?—for this instant  
I make my best speed to Vienna ; place  
My bleeding sword before my Emperor's throne,  
And hope to gain the applause which undelaying  
And punctual obedience may demand  
From a just judge. [Exit BUTLER.]

SCENE X.—*To these enter the COUNTESS TERTSKY, pale and disordered. Her utterance is slow and feeble, and unimpassioned.*

*Oct.* [*meeting her.*] O Countess Tertsky ! These  
are the results  
Of luckless unblest deeds.

*Coun.* They are the fruits  
Of your contrivances. The Duke is dead,

My husband too is dead, the Duchess struggles  
 In the pangs of death, my niece has disappeared.  
 This house of splendour and of princely glory,  
 Doth now stand desolated : the affrighted servants  
 Rush forth through all its doors. I am the last  
 Therein ; I shut it up, and here deliver  
 The keys.

*Oct.* [*with deep anguish.*] O Countess ! my  
 house too is desolate.

*Coun.* Who next is to be murdered ? Who is  
 next

To be maltreated ? Lo ! The Duke is dead.  
 The Emperor's vengeance may be pacified !  
 Spare the old servants ; let not their fidelity  
 Be imputed to the faithful as a crime—  
 The evil destiny surprised my brother  
 Too suddenly : he could not think on them.

*Oct.* Speak not of vengeance ! Speak not of  
 maltreatment !

The Emp'r is appeased ; the heavy fault  
 Hath heavily been expiated—nothing  
 Descended from the father to the daughter,  
 Except his glory and his services.  
 The Empress honours your adversity,  
 Takes part in your afflictions, opens to you  
 Her motherly arms ! Therefore no farther fears  
 Yield yourself up in hope and confidence  
 To the Imperial Grace !

*Coun.* [*with her eye raised to heaven.*] To the  
 grace and mercy of a greater Master

Do I yield up myself. Where shall the body  
Of the Duke have its place of final rest?  
In the Chartreuse, which he himself did found  
At Gitschin, rests the Countess Wallenstein;  
And by her side, to whom he was indebted  
For his first fortunes, gratefully he wished  
He might sometime repose in death! O let him  
Be buried there. And likewise, for my husband's  
Remains, I ask the like grace. The Emperor  
Is now proprietor of all our castles.

This sure may well be granted us—one sepulchre  
Beside the sepulchres of our forefathers!

*Oct.* Countess, you tremble, you turn pale!

*Coun.* [*reassembles all her powers, and speaks  
with energy and dignity.*] You think

More worthily of me, than to believe  
I would survive the downfall of my house.  
We did not hold ourselves too mean to grasp  
After a monarch's crown—the crown did fate  
Deny, but not the feeling and the spirit  
That to the crown belong! We deem a  
Courageous death more worthy of our free station  
Than a dishonoured life.—I have taken poison.

*Oct.* Help! Help! Support her!

*Coun.* Nay, it is too late.  
In a few moments is my fate accomplished.

[*Exit* COUNTESS.]

*Gor.* O house of death and horrors!

[*An officer enters, and brings a letter with the great seal.*]

*Gor.* [*steps forward and meets him.*] What is  
this?

It is the Imperial Seal.

[*He reads the address, and delivers the letter to OCTAVIO with a look of reproach, and with an emphasis on the word.*

To the Prince Piccolomini.

[*OCTAVIO with his whole frame expressive of sudden anguish, raises his eyes to heaven.*

*The curtain drops.*

## NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION,

~~EXTRACTED FROM THE FIRST EDITION.~~

Page 161, line 1.

*This age and after-ages speak my name.*

COULD I have hazarded such a Germanism, as the use of the word after-world for posterity,—“*Elh'spreche Welt und Nachwelt meinen Namen*” might have been rendered with more literal fidelity:—Let world and after-world speak out my name, &c.

Page 161, line 12.

*Make thy flesh shudder, and thy whole heart sicken.*

I have not ventured to affront the fastidious delicacy of our age with a literal translation of this line—

“werth

*Die Eingeweide schaudernd aufzuregen.”*

(This is omitted in the German as it now stands.—D. C.)

Page 240, line 20.

I have here ventured to omit a considerable number of lines. I fear that I should not have done amiss had I taken this liberty more frequently. It is, however, incumbent on me to give the original with a literal translation:—

Weh denen die auf dich vertraun, an dich  
 Die sich're Hütte ihres Glückes lehnem,  
 Gelockt von deiner gastlichen Gestalt!  
 Schnell, unverhofft, bei nächtlich stiller Weile  
 Währt's in dem tück'schen Feuerschunde, lasset  
 Sich aus mit tobender Gewalt, und weg  
 Treibt über alle Pflanzungen der Menschen  
 Der wilde Strom in grausamer Zerstörung;

## WALLENSTEIN.

Du schilderst deines Vaters Herz. Wie du's  
 Beschreibst so ist's in seinem Eingeweide,  
 In dieser schwarzen Heuchlers Brust gesäet.  
 O mich hat Hellenkunst getäuscht! Mir sandte  
 Der Abgrund den verstecktesten der Geister.  
 Den lügekundigsten herauf, und stellt' ihn  
 Als Freund an meine Seite. Wer vermag  
 Der Hölle Macht zu widerstehn! Ich zog  
 Den Basiliken auf an meinem Busen,  
 Mit meinem Herzblut nährte ich ihn, er sog  
 Sich schwelgend voll an meiner Liebe Brust.  
 Ich hatte nimmer Arges gegen ihn,  
 Weit offen liess ich des Gedankens Thore,  
 Und warf die Schlüssel weiser Vorsicht weg,  
 Am Sternenhimmel, &c.

## LITERAL TRANSLATION.

Alas! for those who place their confidence on thee, against  
 thee lean the secure hut of their fortune, allured by thy hos-  
 pitable form. Suddenly, unexpectedly, in a moment still as  
 night, there is a fermentation in the treacherous gulf of fire;  
 it discharges itself with raging force, and away over all the  
 plantations of men drives the wild stream in frightful devas-  
 tation.

## WALLENSTEIN.

[Thou art portraying thy father's heart. As thou de-  
 scribest, even so is it shaped in his entrails, in this black

hypocrite's breast. O, the art of hell has deceived me! The abyss sent up to me the most spotted of the spirits, the most skilful in lies, and placed him as a friend at my side. Who may withstand the power of hell! I took the basilisk to my bosom, with my heart's blood I nourished him; he sucked himself glut-full at the breasts of my love. I never harboured evil towards him; wide open did I leave the door of my thoughts; I threw away the key of wise foresight. In the starry heaven, &c.

We find a difficulty in believing this to have been written by Schiller.

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The following notes are from the pen of the late lamented Mrs. H. N. Coleridge, the editor's sister, who was engaged in an examination of the translation of *Wallenstein* with a view to this edition, which she did not live to complete:—

#### NOTE 1.

About a year and a half ago, a writer in "The Westminster Review" undertook to prove that the world had been mistaken all those years—from 1800 to 1850, that is, half a century—in imagining that it had obtained from the pen of Coleridge a translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, creditable to English literature, both from its poetical merit, and its general fidelity to the spirit of the original work. On the contrary, this critic, who signs himself G. H. E., endeavours to show that "it would have been better for the poet, for the reader, and for the credit of the translator, had Mr. C. refrained from meddling with the work, or confined himself to the task of a faithful interpretation."

In pursuance of this enterprise, he brings forward a certain number of unquestionable errors in the sense of the German; errors, doubtless, well known from the first to students of Schiller, and admirers of Coleridge, (that the report of them reached the German author himself, together with the first news that his noble play had been done into English,

we are credibly informed by one who had a personal acquaintance with him,) and which have not been hitherto generally supposed to prevent Mr. Coleridge's version from being, on the whole, a highly meritorious performance. Of these errors we shall proceed to lay a list before the reader; premising, however, that the greater number of substitutions to be found in Mr. C.'s pages are not, as G. H. E. pronounces them, mere imbecility and verbiage, but contain a sufficiently pertinent meaning, and make up, in a homelier liveliness, what they lack of Schiller's sedate dignity—that of some others the worst that can be said is, that the meaning is strained and far-sought; and that there are but a few instances in which, it must be confessed, the translator has trespassed against good sense, as well as forgotten the German language:—

“Brimful of poetry, o'er the briny ocean, home  
 Seen he fell a nodding—at our house at home.  
 Nid nid nodding—at our house at home.”

#### NOTE 2.

We now proceed to give a list of verbal errors in Mr. Coleridge's version: the translation has remained entirely unaltered from the first edition to the last.

West-Review, July, 1850. Art. 3.

Page 353: “Der Posten,” rendered “travelling-bills,” instead of an “item” or “article in an account.”

PICO., SCH., COL.—Act i. Scene 2.

Page 353: “Geschmeidig” “pliant,” mistaken for “geschmiedet,” “hammered out.”

PICO., SCH., COL.—Act i. Scene 4.

Pages 356-7: “Jagdzug,” rendered “hunting-dress,” instead of “hunting-stud.”

PICO., SCH., COL.—Act i. Scene 9.

Page 358: “Das holde Kind!” translated “The voice of my child!” a bold substitution for “The charming child.”

PICO., SCH., COL.—Act i. Scene 8.



Page 360: "Was denn?" "What *then?*" instead of  
"What?"  
PICC., SCH., COL.—*Act ii. Scene 7.*

Page 361: "Ist unser Glaub' um Kanzel und Altar," rendered  
"Our faith hangs upon the pulpit and altar," instead  
of "is without pulpit and altar."

PICC., SCH., COL.—*Act ii. Scene 12.*

Page 362: "Losung," "watchword," mistaken for "Erlö-  
sung," "redemption."

SCH., WALL., COL.—*Act iv. Scene 7.*

Page 365: "Verstecktesten" most secret," mistaken for  
"beflecktesten," "most spotted." NOTES, p. 328.

THE END



## THE LIFE OF KEATS.

THERE are few poets whose works contain slighter hints of their personal history than those of Keats ; yet there are, perhaps, even fewer, whose real lives, or rather the conditions upon which they lived, are more clearly traceable in what they have written. To write the life of a man was formerly understood to mean the cataloguing and placing of circumstances, of those things which stood about the life and were more or less related to it, but were not the life itself. But Biography from day to day holds dates cheaper and facts dearer. A man's life, (as far as its outward events are concerned,) may be made for him, as his clothes are by the tailor, of this cut or that, of finer or coarser material, but the gait and gesture show through, and give to trappings, in themselves characterless, an individuality that belongs to the man himself. It is those essential facts which underlie the life and make the individual man, that are of importance, and it is the cropping out of these upon the surface, that

gives us indications by which to judge of the true nature hidden below. Every man has his block given him, and the figure he cuts will depend very much upon the shape of that — upon the knots and twists which existed in it from the beginning. We were designed in the cradle, perhaps earlier, and it is in finding out this design, and shaping ourselves to it, that our years are spent wisely. It is the vain endeavor to make ourselves what we are not that has strewn history with so many broken purposes and lives left in the rough.

Keats hardly lived long enough to develop a well-outlined character, for that results commonly from the resistance made by temperament to the many influences by which the world, as it may happen then to be, endeavors to mould every one in its own image. What his temperament was we can see clearly, and also that it subordinated itself more and more to the discipline of art.

JOHN KEATS, the second of four children, like Chaucer, was a Londoner, but unlike Chaucer, he was certainly not of gentle blood. Mr. Monckton Milnes, who seems to have had a kindly wish to create him gentleman by brevet, says that he was "born in the upper ranks of the middle class." This shows a commendable tenderness for the nerves of English society, and reminds

one of Northcote's story of the violin-player who, wishing to compliment his pupil, George III., divided all fiddlers into three classes, those who could not play at all, those who played very badly, and those who played very well, assuring his majesty that he had made such commendable progress as to have already reached the second rank. The American public will perhaps not be disturbed by knowing that the father of Keats (as Mr. Milnes had told us in an earlier biography) "was employed in the establishment of Mr. Jennings, the proprietor of large livery-stables on the Pavement in Moorfields, nearly opposite the entrance into Finsbury Circus." So that, after all, it was not so bad; for, *first*, Mr. Jennings was a *proprietor*; *second*, he was the proprietor of an *establishment*; *third*, he was the proprietor of a *large* establishment; and *fourth*, this large establishment was *nearly* opposite Finsbury Circus, — a name which vaguely dilates the imagination with all sorts of conjectured grandeurs. It is true, Leigh Hunt asserts that Keats "was a little too sensitive on the score of his origin,"\* but we can find no trace of such a feeling either in his poetry, or in such of his letters as have been printed. We suspect the fact to have been that he resented with becoming pride the vulgar Blackwood and Quarterly standard which measured genius

\* Hunt's *Autobiography*, (American edition,) vol. ii., p. 38

by genealogies. It is enough that his poetical pedigree is of the best, tracing through Spenser to Chaucer, and that Pegasus does not stand at hvery even in the largest establishments in Moor-fields.

As well as we can make out, then, the father of Keats was a groom in the service of Mr. Jennings, and married the daughter of his master. Thus, on the mother's side, at least, we find a grandfather; on the father's there is no hint of such an ancestor, and we must charitably take him for granted. It is of more importance that the elder Keats was a man of sense and energy, and that his wife was a lively and intelligent woman, who hastened the birth of the poet by her passionate devotion to amusement, bringing him into the world, a seven months' child, on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1795, instead of the 29<sup>th</sup> December as would have been conventionally proper. Mr. Milnes describes her as "tall, with a large oval face, and a somewhat saturnine demeanor.\* This last circumstance does not agree very well with what he had just before told us of her liveliness, but he consoles us by adding that "she succeeded, however, in inspiring her children with the profoundest affection." This was particularly true of John, who once, when between four and five years old, mounted guard at her chamber-door

\* Milnes' *Life of Keats*, (American edition,) p. 16

with an old sword, when she was ill and the doctor had ordered her not to be disturbed.\*

In 1804, Keats being in his ninth year, his father was killed by a fall from his horse. His mother seems to have been ambitious for her children, and there was some talk of sending John to Harrow. Fortunately this plan was thought too expensive, and he was sent instead to the School of Mr. Clarke at Enfield with his brothers. A maternal uncle, who had distinguished himself by his courage under Duncan at Camperdown, was the hero of his nephews, and they went to school resolved to maintain the family reputation for courage. John was always fighting, and was chiefly noted among his school-fellows as a strange compound of pluck and sensibility. He attacked an usher who had boxed his brother's ears, and when his mother died, in 1810, was moodily inconsolable, (in spite, it seems, of her "saturnine demeanor,") hiding himself for several days in a nook under the master's desk, and refusing all comfort from teacher or friend.

He was popular at school, as boys of spirit always are, and impressed his companions with a sense of his power. They thought he would one day be a famous soldier. This may have been owing to the stories he told them of the heroic

\* Haydon tells the story differently, but we think Mr. Milnes's version the best.

uncle, whose deeds, we may be sure, were properly famous by the boy Homer, and whom they probably took for an admiral at the least, as it would have been well for Keats's literary prosperity if he had been. At any rate, they thought John would be a great man, which is the main thing, for the public opinion of the playground is truer and more discerning than that of the world, and if you tell us what the boy was, we will tell you what the man longs to be, however he may be repressed by necessity or fear of the police reports.

Mr. Milnes has failed to discover any thing else especially worthy of record in the school-life of Keats. He translated the twelve books of the *Æneid*, read Robinson Crusoe and the *Incas* of Peru, and looked into Shakspeare. He left school in 1810, with little Latin and no Greek, but he had studied Spence's *Polymetis*, Tooke's *Pantheon*, and Lempriere's *Dictionary*, and knew gods, nymphs, and heroes, which were quite as good company as aorists and aspirates. It is pleasant to fancy the horror of those respectable writers if their pages could suddenly have become alive under their pens with all that the young poet saw in them.\*

\* There is always some one willing to make himself a sort of accessory after the fact in any success; always an old woman or two, ready to remember omens of all quantities and qualitics in the childhood of persons who have become dis



On leaving school, he was apprenticed for five years to a surgeon at Edmonton. His master was a Mr. Hammond, "of some eminence" in his profession, as Mr. Milnes takes care to assure us. The place was of more importance than the master, for its neighborhood to Enfield enabled him to keep up his intimacy with the family of his former teacher, Mr. Clarke, and to borrow books of them. In 1812, when he was in his seventeenth year, Mr. Charles Cowden Clarke lent him the *Faerie Queene*. Nothing that is told of Orpheus or Amphion is more wonderful than this miracle of Spenser's, transforming a surgeon's apprentice into a great poet. Keats learned at once the secret of his birth, and henceforward his indentures ran to Apollo instead of Mr. Hammond. Thus could the Muse defend her son. It

tinguished. Accordingly, a certain "Mrs. Grafty of Craven Street, Finsbury," assures Mr. George Keats, when he tells her that John is determined to be a poet, "that this was very odd, because when he could just speak, instead of answering questions put to him, he would always make a rhyme to the last word people said, and then laugh." The early histories of heroes, like those of nations, are always more or less mythical, and we give the story for what it is worth. Doubtless there is a gleam of intelligence in it, for the old lady pronounces it odd that any one should *determine* to be a poet, and seems to have wished to hint that the matter was determined earlier and by a higher disposing power. There are few children who do not soon discover the charm of rhyme, and perhaps fewer who can resist making fun of the Mrs. Graftys of Craven Street, Finsbury, when they have the chance. See Haydon's *Autobiography*, vol. i. p. 361.

is the old story,—the lost heir discovered by his aptitude for what is gentle and knightly.

Before long we find him studying Chaucer, then Shakspeare, and afterward Milton. That he read wisely, his comments on the *Paradise Lost* are enough to prove. He now also commenced poet himself, but does not appear to have neglected the study of his profession. He was a youth of energy and purpose, and, though he no doubt penned many a stanza when he should have been anatomizing, and walked the hospitals accompanied by the early gods, nevertheless passed a very creditable examination in 1817. In the spring of this year, also, he prepared to take his first degree as poet, and accordingly published a small volume containing a selection of his earlier essays in verse. It attracted little attention, and the rest of this year seems to have been occupied with a journey on foot in Scotland, and the composition of *Endymion*, which was published in 1818. Milton's *Tetrachordon* was not better abused; but Milton's assailants were unorganized, and were obliged each to print and pay for his own dingy little quarto, trusting to the natural laws of demand and supply to furnish him with readers. Keats was arraigned by the constituted authorities of literary justice. They might be, nay, they were Jeffmeses and Scroggses, but the sentence was published, and the penalty inflicted before all England. The difference between his

fortune and Milton's was that between being pelted by a mob of personal enemies, and being set in the pillory. In the first case, the annoyance brushes off mostly with the mud; in the last, there is no solace but the consciousness of suffering in a great cause. This solace, to a certain extent, Keats had; for his ambition was noble, and he hoped not to make a great reputation, but to be a great poet. Haydon says that Wordsworth and Keats were the only men he had ever seen who looked conscious of a lofty purpose.

It is curious that men should resent more fiercely what they suspect to be good verses, than what they know to be bad morals. Is it because they feel themselves incapable of the one, and not of the other? However it be, the best poetry has been the most savagely attacked, and men who scrupulously practised the Ten Commandments as if there were never a *not* in any of them, felt every sentiment of their better nature outraged by the *Lyrical Ballads*. It is idle to attempt to show that Keats did not suffer keenly from the vulgarities of Blackwood and the Quarterly. He suffered in proportion as his ideal was high, and he was conscious of falling below it. In England, especially, it is not pleasant to be ridiculous, even if you are a lord; but to be ridiculous and an apothecary at the same time, is almost as bad as it was formerly to be excommunicated. *A priori*, there was something absurd

in poetry written by the son of an assistant in the livery-stables of Mr. Jennings, even though they were an establishment, and a large establishment, and nearly opposite Finsbury Circus. Mr. Gifford, the ex-cobbler, thought so in the Quarterly, and Mr. Terry, the actor,\* thought so even more distinctly in Blackwood, bidding the young apothecary "back to his gallipots!" It is not pleasant to be talked down upon by your inferiors who happen to have the advantage of position, nor to be drenched with ditch-water, though you know it to be thrown by a scullion in a garret.

Keats, as his was a temperament in which sensibility was excessive, could not but be galled by this treatment. He was galled the more that he was also a man of strong sense, and capable of understanding clearly how hard it is to make men acknowledge solid value in a person whom they have once heartily laughed at. Reputation is in itself only a farthing-candle, of wavering and uncertain flame, and easily blown out, but it is the light by which the world looks for and finds merit. Keats longed for fame, but longed above all to deserve it. Thrilling with the electric touch of sacred leaves, he saw in vision, like Dante, that small procession of the elder poets to which only elect centuries can add another laurel-

\* Haydon (*Autobiography*, vol. i. p. 379,) says that he "strongly suspects" Terry to have written the articles in Blackwood.



room and sit silent for hours. But we rather think that the conversation, where Mr. Haydon was, resembled that in a young author's first play, where the other interlocutors are only brought in as convenient points for the hero to hitch the interminable web of his monologue on. Besides, Keats had been continuing his education this year, by a course of Elgin marbles and pictures by the great Italians, and might very naturally have found little to say about Mr. Haydon's extensive works, which he would have cared to hear. Mr. Milnes, on the other hand, in his eagerness to prove that Keats was not killed by the article in the Quarterly, is carried too far toward the opposite extreme, and more than hints that he was not even hurt by it. This would have been true of Wordsworth, who, by a constant companionship with mountains, had acquired something of their manners, but was simply impossible to a man of Keats's temperament.

On the whole, perhaps, we need not respect Keats the less for having been gifted with sensibility, and may even say what we believe to be true, that his health was injured by the failure of his book. A man cannot have a sensuous nature and be pachydermatous at the same time, and if he be imaginative as well as sensuous, he suffers just in proportion to the amount of his imagination. It is perfectly true that what we call the world, in these affairs, is nothing more than a

mere Brocken spectre, the projected shadow of ourselves; but as long as we do not know it, it is a very passable giant. We are not without experience of natures so purely intellectual that their bodies had no more concern in their mental doings and sufferings, than a house has with the good or ill fortune of its occupant. But poets are not built on this plan, and especially poets like Keats, in whom the moral seems to have so perfectly interfused the physical man, that you might almost say he could feel sorrow with his hands, so truly did his body, like that of Donne's mistress, think and remember and forebode. The healthiest poet of whom our civilization has been capable says that when he beholds

———"desert a beggar born,  
And strength by limping sway disabled,  
And art made tongue-tied by authority,"

(alluding, plainly enough, to the Giffords of his day,)

"And simple truth miscalled simplicity,"

(as it was long afterward in Wordsworth's case,)

"And Captive Good attending Captain Ill,

that then even he, the poet to whom of all others, life seems to have been dearest, as it was also the fullest of enjoyment, "tired of all these," had nothing for it but to cry for "restful Death."

Keats, as we have said, accepted his ill fortune courageously. On the 9th October, 1818, he writes

to his publisher, Mr. Hessey, "I cannot but feel indebted to those gentlemen who have taken my part. As for the rest, I begin to get acquainted with my own strength and weakness. Praise or blame has but a momentary effect on the man whose love of beauty in the abstract makes him a severe critic of his own works. My own domestic criticism has given me pain without comparison beyond what "Blackwood" or the "Quarterly" could inflict: and also, when I feel I am right, no external praise can give me such a glow as my own solitary re-perception and ratification of what is fine. J. S. is perfectly right in regard to "the slipshod *Endymion*." That it is so is no fault of mine. No! though it may sound a little paradoxical, it is as good as I had power to make it by myself. Had I been nervous about its being a perfect piece, and with that view asked advice and trembled over every page, it would not have been written; for it is not in my nature to fumble. I will write independently. I have written independently *without judgment*. I may write independently and *with judgment*, hereafter. The Genius of Poetry must work out its own salvation in a man. It cannot be matured by law and precept, but by sensation and watchfulness in itself. That which is creative must create itself. In "*Endymion*" I leaped headlong into the sea, and thereby have become better acquainted with the soundings, the quicksands



and the rocks, than if I had stayed upon the green shore, and piped a silly pipe, and took tea and comfortable advice. I was never afraid of failure; for I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest.”\*

This was undoubtedly true, and it was naturally the side which a large-minded person would display to a friend. This is what he thought, but whether it was what he *felt*, we think doubtful. We look upon it rather as one of the phenomena of that multanimous nature of the poet, which makes him for the moment that which he has an intellectual perception of. Elsewhere he says something which seems to hint at the true state of the case. “I must think that difficulties nerve the spirit of a man: *they make our prime objects a refuge as well as a passion.*” One cannot help contrasting Keats with Wordsworth; the one altogether poet, the other essentially a Wordsworth with the poetic faculty added; the one shifting from form to form, and from style to style, and pouring his hot throbbing life into every mould; the other remaining always the individual, producing works, and not so much living in his poems, as memorially recording his life in them. When Wordsworth alludes to the foolish criticisms on his writings, he speaks serenely and generously of Wordsworth the poet,

\* Milnes's *Life and Letters of Keats*, pp 145-6.

as if he were an unbiased third person, who takes up the argument merely in the interest of literature. He towers into a bald egotism which is quite above and beyond selfishness. Poesy was his employment; it was Keats's very existence, and he felt the rough treatment of his verses as if it had been the wounding of a limb. To Wordsworth, composing was a healthy exercise; his slow pulse and unimpressible nature gave him assurance of a life so long that he could wait; and when we read his poems we should never suspect the existence in him of any sense but that of observation, as if Wordsworth the poet were only a great sleepless eye, accompanied by Mr. Wordsworth, the distributor of stamps, as a reverential scribe and Baruch. But every one of Keats's poems was a sacrifice of vitality; a virtue went away from him into every one of them; even yet, as we turn the leaves, they seem to warm and thrill our fingers with the flush of his fine senses, and the flutter of his electrical nerves, and we do not wonder he felt that what he did was to be done swiftly.

In the mean time, his younger brother languished and died; his elder seems to have been in some way unfortunate, and had gone to America, and Keats himself showed symptoms of the hereditary disease which caused his death at last. It is in October, 1818, that we find the first allusion to a passion, which was, ere long, to consume

him. It is plain enough beforehand, that those were not moral or mental graces that should attract a man like Keats. His intellect was satisfied and absorbed by his art, his books, and his friends. He could have companionship and appreciation from men; what he craved of woman was only repose. That luxurious nature, which would have tossed uneasily on a crumpled rose leaf, must have something softer to rest upon than intellect, something less ethereal than culture. It was his body that needed to have its equilibrium restored, the waste of his nervous energy that must be repaired by deep draughts of the overflowing life and drowsy tropical force of an abundant and healthily-poised womanhood. Writing to his sister-in-law, he says of this nameless person: "She is not a Cleopatra, but is, at least, a Charmian; she has a rich eastern look; she has fine eyes, and fine manners. When she comes into a room, she makes the same impression as the beauty of a leopardess. She is too fine and too conscious of herself to repulse any man who may address her. From habit, she thinks that *nothing particular*. I always find myself at ease with such a woman; the picture before me, always gives me a life and animation which I cannot possibly feel with any thing inferior. I am at such times too much occupied in admiring, to be awkward, or in a tremble. I forget myself entirely, because I live in her.

You will by this time think I am in love with her, so, before I go any farther, I will tell you that I am not. She kept me awake one night, as a tune of Mozart's might do. I speak of the thing as a pastime and an amusement, than which I can feel none deeper than a conversation with an imperial woman, the very *yes* and *no* of whose life is to me a banquet. . . . I like her and her like, because one has no *sensation*; what we both are, is taken for granted. . . . She walks across a room in such a manner that a man is drawn toward her with magnetic power. . . .

I believe, though, she has faults, the same as a Cleopatra or a Charmian might have had. Yet she is a fine thing, speaking in a worldly way; for there are two distinct tempers of mind in which we judge of things—the worldly, theatrical, and pantomimical; and the unearthly, spiritual, and ethereal. In the former, Bonaparte, Lord Byron, and this Charmian hold the first place in our minds; in the latter, John Howard, Bishop Hooker, rocking his child's cradle, and you, my dear sister, are the conquering feelings. As a man of the world, I love the rich talk of a Charmian; as an eternal being, I love the thought of you. I should like her to ruin me, and I should like you to save me."

It is pleasant always to see Love hiding his head with such pains, while his whole body is so clearly visible, as in this extract. This lady, it

seems, is not a Cleopatra, only a Charmian ; but presently we find that she is imperial. He does not love her, but he would just like to be ruined by her, nothing more. This glimpse of her, with her leopardess beauty, crossing the room and drawing men after her magnetically, is all we have. She seems to have been still living in 1848, and as Mr. Milnes tells us, kept the memory of the poet sacred. "She is an East Indian," Keats says, "and ought to be her grandfather's heir." Her name we do not know.

Between this time and the spring of 1820, he seems to have worked assiduously. Of course, worldly success was of more importance than ever. He began *Hyperion*, but had given it up in September, 1819, because, as he said, "there were too many Miltonic inversions in it." He wrote *Lamia* after an attentive study of Dryden's versification. This period also produced the *Eve of St. Agnes*, *Isabella*, and the odes to the *Nightingale*, and to the *Grecian Urn*. He studied Italian, read Ariosto, and wrote part of a humorous poem, *The Cap and Bells*. He tried his hand at tragedy, and Mr. Milnes has published among his "Remains," *Otho the Great*, and all that was ever written of *King Stephen*. We think he did unwisely, for a biographer is hardly called upon to show how ill his *biographee* could do any thing.

In the winter of 1820, he was chilled in riding

on the top of a stage-coach, and came home in a state of feverish excitement. He was persuaded to go to bed, and in getting between the cold sheets, coughed slightly. "That is blood in my mouth," he said, "bring me the candle; let me see this blood." It was of a brilliant red, and his medical knowledge enabled him to interpret the augury. Those narcotic odors that seem to breathe seaward, and steep in repose the senses of the voyager who is drifting toward the shore of the mysterious Other World, appeared to envelop him, and, looking up with sudden calmness, he said, "I know the color of that blood; it is arterial blood; I cannot be deceived in that color. That drop is my death-warrant; I must die."

There was a slight rally during the summer of that year, but toward autumn he grew worse again, and it was decided that he should go to Italy. He was accompanied thither by his friend, Mr. Severn, an artist. After embarking, he wrote to his friend, Mr. Brown. We give a part of this letter, which is so deeply tragic that the sentences we take almost seem to break away from the rest with a cry of anguish, like the branches of Dante's lamentable wood.

"I wish to write on subjects that will not agitate me much. There is one I must mention and have done with it. Even if my body would recover of itself, this would prevent it. The very thing which I want to live most for will be a great

## P R E F A C E .

KNOWING within myself the manner in which this Poem has been produced, it is not without a feeling of regret that I make it public.

What manner I mean, will be quite clear to the reader, who must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished. The two first books, and indeed the two last, I feel sensible are not of such completion as to warrant their passing the press; nor should they if I thought a year's castigation would do them any good; — it will not: the foundations are too sandy. It is just that this youngster should die away: a sad thought for me, if I had not some hope that while it is dwindling I may be plotting, and fitting myself for verses fit to live.

This may be speaking too presumptuously, and may deserve a punishment: but no feeling man will be forward to inflict it: he will leave me alone, with the conviction that there is not a fiercer hell than the failure in a great object. This is not written with the least atom of purpose to

forestall criticisms of course, but from the desire I have to conciliate men who are competent to look, and who do look with a zealous eye, to the honour of English literature.

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy ; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted ; thence proceeds mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters which those men I speak of must necessarily taste in going over the following pages.

I hope I have not in too late a day touched the beautiful mythology of Greece, and dulled its brightness : for I wish to try once more before I bid it farewell.

TEIGNMOUTH, *April 10, 1812.*



## ENDYMION.

### BOOK I.

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever :  
Its loveliness increases ; it will never  
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet  
breathing.

Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darken'd ways  
Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all,  
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep ; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in ; and clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season ; the mid-forest brake,  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms :  
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms

We have imagined for the mighty dead,  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences  
For one short hour; no, even as the trees  
That whisper round a temple become soon  
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,  
The passion poesy, glories infinite,  
Haunt us till they become a cheering light  
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,  
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,  
They alway must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness that I  
Will trace the story of Endymion.  
The very music of the name has gone  
Into my being, and each pleasant scene  
Is growing fresh before me as the green  
Of our own valleys: so I will begin  
Now while I cannot hear the city's din;  
Now while the early budders are just new,  
And run in mazes of the youngest hue  
About old forests; while the willow trails  
Its delicate amber; and the dairy pails  
Bring home increase of milk. And, as the year  
Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly steer  
My little boat, for many quiet hours,  
With streams that deepen freshly into bowers.

Many and many a verse I hope to write,  
Before the daisies, vermeil rimn'd and white,  
Hide in deep herbage ; and ere yet the bees  
Hum about globes of clover and sweet peas,  
I must be near the middle of my story.  
O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,  
See it half-finish'd : but let Autumn bold,  
With universal tinge of sober gold,  
Be all about me when I make an end.  
And now at once, adventuresome, I send  
My herald thought into a wilderness :  
There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress  
My uncertain path with green, that I may speed  
Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.

Upon the sides of Latmos was outspread  
A mighty forest ; for the moist earth fed  
So plenteously all weed-hidden roots  
Into o'erhanging boughs, and precious fruits.  
And it had gloomy shades, sequester'd deep,  
Where no man went ; and if from shepherd's  
keep

A lamb stray'd far a-down those inmost glens,  
Never again saw he the happy pens  
Whither his brethren, bleating with content,  
Over the hills at every nightfall went.  
Among the shepherds 'twas believed ever,  
That not one fleecy lamb which thus did sever  
From the white flock, but pass'd unworried  
By any wolf, or pard with prying head,

Until it came to some unfooted plains  
Where fed the herds of Pan: ay, great his  
gains

Who thus one lamb did lose. Paths there were  
many,

Winding through palmy fern, and rushes fenny,  
And ivy banks; all leading pleasantly  
To a wide lawn, whence one could only see  
Stems thronging all around between the swell  
Of turf and slanting branches: who could tell  
The freshness of the space of heaven above,  
Edged round with dark tree-tops? through which  
a dove

Would often beat its wings, and often too  
A little cloud would move across the blue

Full in the middle of this pleasantness  
There stood a marble altar, with a tress  
Of flowers budded newly; and the dew  
Had taken fairy phantasies to strew  
Daisies upon the sacred sward last eve,  
And so the dawned light in pomp receive.  
For 'twas the morn: Apollo's upward fire  
Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre  
Of brightness so unsullied, that therein  
A melancholy spirit well might win  
Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine  
Into the winds: rain-scented eglantine  
Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun  
The lark was lost in him; cold springs had run

To warm their chilliest bubbles in the grass ;  
Man's voice was on the mountains ; and the

DAZZLE

Of nature's lives and wonders pulsed tenfold,  
To feel this sun-rise and its glories old.

Now while the silent workings of the dawn  
Were busiest, into that self-same lawn  
All suddenly, with joyful cries, there sped  
A troop of little children garlanded ;  
Who gathering round the altar, seem'd to pry  
Earnestly round as wishing to espy  
Some folk of holiday : nor had they waited  
For many moments, ere their ears were sated  
With a faint breath of music, which even then  
Fill'd out its voice, and died away again.

Within a little space again it gave  
Its airy swellings, with a gentle wave, [ing  
To light-hung leaves, in smoothest echoes break-  
Through copse-clad valleys,—ere their death,  
o'ertaking

The surgy murmurs of the lonely sea.

And now, as deep into the wood as we  
Might mark a lynx's eye, there glimmer'd light  
Fair faces and a rush of garments white,  
Plainer and plainer showing, till at last  
Into the widest alley they all past,  
Making directly for the woodland altar.  
O kindly muse ! let not my weak tongue falter

In tending of this goodly company,  
Of their old piety, and of their glee:  
But let a portion of ethereal dew  
Fall on my head, and presently unmew  
My soul; that I may dare, in wayfaring,  
To stammer where old Chaucer used to sing.

Leading the way, young damsels danced along,  
Bearing the burden of a shepherd's song;  
Each having a white wicker, overbrimm'd  
With April's tender younglings: next, well trimm'd,  
A crowd of shepherds with as sunburnt looks  
As may be read of in Arcadian books;  
Such as sat listening round Apollo's pipe,  
When the great deity, for earth too ripe,  
Let his divinity o'erflowing die  
In music, through the vales of Thessaly:  
Some idly trail'd their sheep-hooks on the ground,  
And some kept up a shrilly mellow sound  
With ebon-tipped flutes: close after these,  
Now coming from beneath the forest trees,  
A venerable priest full soberly,  
Begirt with ministering looks: alway his eye  
Steadfast upon the matted turf he kept,  
And after him his sacred vestments swept.  
From his right hand there swung a vase, milk  
white,  
Of mingled wine, out-sparkling generous light;  
And in his left he held a basket full  
Of all sweet herbs that searching eye could cull.

Wild thyme, and valley-lilies whiter still  
Than Leda's love, and cresses from the rill.  
His aged head, crowned with beechen wreath,  
Seem'd like a poll of ivy in the teeth  
Of winter hoar. Then came another crowd  
Of shepherds, lifting in due time aloud  
Their share of the ditty. After them appear'd,  
Up-follow'd by a multitude that rear'd  
Their voices to the clouds, a fair-wrought car  
Easily rolling so as scarce to mar  
The freedom of three steeds of dapple brown.  
Who stood therein did seem of great renown  
Among the throng. His youth was fully blown,  
Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown;  
And, for those simple times, his garments were  
A chieftain king's; beneath his breast, half  
bare,  
Was hung a silver bugle, and between  
His nery knees there lay a boar-spear keen.  
A smile was on his countenance; he seem'd  
To common lookers-on like one who dream'd  
Of idleness in groves Elysian:  
But there were some who feelingly could scan  
A lurking trouble in his nether lip,  
And see that oftentimes the reins would slip  
Through his forgotten hands: then would they  
sigh,  
And think of yellow leaves, of owlets' cry,  
Of logs piled solemnly.—Ah, well-a-day,  
Why should our young Endymion pine away!

Soon the assembly, in a circle ranged,  
Stood silent round the shrine: each look was  
changed

To sudden veneration: women meek  
Beckon'd their sons to silence; while each cheek  
Of virgin bloom paled gently for slight fear.

Endymion too, without a forest peer,  
Stood, wan, and pale, and with an awed face,  
Among his brothers of the mountain chase.

In midst of all, the venerable priest  
Eyed them with joy from greatest to the least,  
And, after lifting up his aged hands,

Thus spake he: "Men of Latmos! shepherd  
bands!

Whose care it is to guard a thousand flocks:  
Whether descended from beneath the rocks

That overtop your mountains; whether come  
From valleys where the pipe is never dumb;  
Or from your swelling downs, where sweet air  
stirs

Blue harebells lightly, and where prickly furze  
Buds lavish gold; or ye, whose precious charge

Nibble their fill at ocean's very marge,  
Whose mellow reeds are touch'd with sounds for-  
lorn

By the dim echoes of old Triton's horn:

Mothers and wives! who day by day prepare  
The scrip, with needments, for the mountain air;  
And all ye gentle girls who foster up  
Udderless lambs, and in a little cup



Will put choice honey for a favour'd youth :  
Yea, every one attend ! for in good truth  
Our vows are wanting to our great god Pan.  
Are not our lowing heifers sleeker than  
Night-swollen mushrooms ? Are not our wide  
    plains  
Speckled with countless fleeces ? Have not  
    rains  
Green'd over April's lap ? No howling sad  
Sickens our fearful ewes ; and we have had  
Great bounty from Endymion our lord.  
The earth is glad : the merry lark has pour'd  
His early song against yon breezy sky,  
That spreads so clear o'er our solemnity."

Thus ending, on the shrine he heap'd a spire  
Of teeming sweets, enkindling sacred fire ;  
Anon he stain'd the thick and spongy sod  
With wine, in honour of the shepherd-god.  
Now while the earth was drinking it, and while  
Bay leaves were crackling in the fragrant pile,  
And gummy frankincense was sparkling bright  
'Neath smothering parsley, and a hazy light  
Spread grayly eastward, thus a chorus sang :

" O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang  
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death  
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness ;  
Who lovest to see the hamadryads dress

Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken;  
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and  
          hearken

The dreary melody of bedded reeds—  
In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds  
The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth,  
Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth  
Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou now,  
By thy love's milky brow!  
By all the trembling mazes that she ran,  
Hear us, great Pan!

“O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, tur-  
          tles

Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,  
What time thou wanderest at eventide  
Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side  
Of thine embossed realms: O thou, to whom  
Broad-leaved fig-trees even now foredoom  
Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow-girted bees  
Their golden honeycombs; our village leas  
Their fairest blossom'd beans and poppied corn;  
The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,  
To sing for thee; low-creeping strawberries  
Their summer coolness; pent-up butterflies  
Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh-budding  
          year

All its completions—be quickly near,  
By every wind that nods the mountain pine,  
O forester divine!

“Thou, to whom every faun and satyr flies  
For willing service ; whether to surprise  
The squatted hare while in half-sleeping fit ;  
Or upward ragged precipices flit  
To save poor lambkins from the eagle’s maw ;  
Or by mysterious enticement draw  
Bewilder’d shepherds to their path again ;  
Or to tread breathless round the frothy main,  
And gather up all fancifullest shells  
For thee to tumble into Naiads’ cells,  
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping ;  
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,  
The while they pelt each other on the crown  
With silvery oak-apples, and fir-cones brown—  
By all the echoes that about thee ring,  
Hear us, O satyr king !

“O Harkener to the loud-clapping shears,  
While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
A ram goes bleating : Winder of the horn,  
When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn  
Anger our huntsman : Breather round our  
farms,  
To keep off mildews, and all weather harms :  
Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,  
That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,  
And wither drearily on barren moors :  
Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
Leading to universal knowledge—see,  
Great son of Dryope,

The many that are come to pay their vows  
With leaves about their brows!

Be still the unimaginable lodge  
For solitary thinkings; such as dodge  
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,  
Then leave the naked brain: be still the heaven,  
That spreading in this dull and clodded earth,  
Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth:  
Be still a symbol of immensity:  
A firmament reflected in a sea;  
An element filling the space between;  
An unknown—but no more: we humbly screen  
With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,  
And giving out a shout most heaven-rending,  
Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,  
Upon thy Mount Lycean!”

Even while they brought the burden to a close,  
A shout from the whole multitude arose,  
That linger'd in the air like dying rolls  
Of abrupt thunder, when Ionian shoals  
Of dolphins bob their noses through the brine.  
Meantime, on shady levels, mossy fine,  
Young companies nimbly began dancing  
To the swift treble pipe, and humming string.  
Ay, those fair living forms swam heavenly  
To tunes forgotten—out of memory: [bred  
Fair creatures! whose young children's children  
Thermopylæ its heroes—not yet dead,

But in old marbles ever beautiful.  
High genitors, unconscious did they cull  
Time's sweet first-fruits—they danced to weariness,

And then in quiet circles did they press  
The hillock turf, and caught the latter end  
Of some strange history, potent to send  
A young mind from its bodily tenement.  
Or they might watch the quoit-pitchers, intent  
On either side ; pitying the sad death  
Of Hyacinthus, when the cruel breath  
Of Zephyr slew him,—Zephyr penitent,  
Who now, ere Phœbus mounts the firmament,  
Fondles the flower amid the sobbing rain.  
The archers too, upon a wider plain,  
Beside the feathery whizzing of the shaft,  
And the dull twanging bowstring, and the raft  
Branch down sweeping from a tall ash top,  
Call'd up a thousand thoughts to envelope [knee  
Those who would watch. Perhaps, the trembling  
And frantic gape of lonely Niobe,  
Poor, lonely Niobe ! when her lovely young  
Were dead and gone, and her caressing tongue  
Lay a lost thing upon her paly lip,  
And very, very deadliness did nip  
Her motherly cheeks. Aroused from this sad  
mood

By one, who at a distance loud halloo'd,  
Uplifting his strong bow into the air,  
Many might after brighter visions stare •

After the Argonauts, in blind amaze  
Tossing about on Neptune's restless ways,  
Until, from the horizon's vaulted side,  
There shot a golden splendour far and wide,  
Spangling those million poutings of the brine  
With quivering ore: 'twas even an awful shine  
From the exaltation of Apollo's bow ;  
A heavenly beacon in their dreary woe.  
Who, thus were ripe for high contemplating,  
Might turn their steps towards the sober ring  
Where sat Endymion and the aged priest  
Among shepherds gone in eld, whose looks increased  
The silvery setting of their mortal star.  
There they discoursed upon the fragile bar  
That keeps us from our homes ethereal ;  
And what our duties there : to nightly call  
Vesper, the beauty-crest of summer weather ;  
To summon all the downiest clouds together  
For the sun's purple couch ; to emulate  
In ministering the potent rule of fate  
With speed of fire-tail'd exhalations ;  
To tint her pallid cheek with bloom, who cons  
Sweet poesy by moonlight : besides these,  
A world of other unguess'd offices.  
Anon they wander'd, by divine converse,  
Into Elysium ; vying to rehearse  
Each one his own anticipated bliss.  
One felt heart-certain that he could not miss  
His quick-gone love, among fair blossom'd boughs  
Where every zephyr-sigh pouts, and endows

Her lips with music for the welcoming.  
Another wish'd, 'mid that eternal spring,  
To meet his rosy child, with feathery sails,  
Sweeping, eye-carnestly, through almond vales :  
Who, suddenly, should stoop through the smooth  
wind,

And with the balmiest leaves his temples bind ;  
And, ever after, through those regions be  
His messenger, his little Mercury.

Some were athirst in soul to see again  
Their fellow-huntsmen o'er the wide champaign  
In times long past ; to sit with them, and talk  
Of all the chances in their earthly walk ;  
Comparing, joyfully, their plenteous stores  
Of happiness, to when upon the moors,  
Benighted, close they huddled from the cold,  
And shared their famish'd scrips. Thus all out  
told

Their fond imaginations,—saving him  
Whose eyelids curtain'd up their jewels dim,  
Endymion : yet hourly had he striven  
To hide the cankering venom, that had riven  
His fainting recollections. Now indeed  
His senses had swoon'd off : he did not heed  
The sudden silence, or the whispers low,  
Or the old eyes dissolving at his woe,  
Or anxious calls, or close of trembling palms,  
Or maiden's sigh, that grief itself embalms :  
But in the self-same fixed trance he kept,  
Like one who on the earth had never slept

Ay, even as dead-still as a marble man,  
Frozen in that old tale Arabian.

Who whispers him so pantingly and close ?  
Peona, his sweet sister : of all those,  
His friends, the dearest. Hushing signs she made  
And breathed a sister's sorrow to persuade  
A yielding up, a cradling on her care.  
Her eloquence did breathe away the curse :  
She led him, like some midnight spirit nurse  
Of happy changes in emphatic dreams,  
Along a path between two little streams,—  
Guarding his forehead, with her round elbow,  
From low-grown branches, and his footsteps slow  
From stumbling over stumps and hillocks small ;  
Until they came to where these streamlets fall,  
With mingled bubblings and a gentle rush,  
Into a river, clear, brimful, and flush  
With crystal mocking of the trees and sky.  
A little shallop, floating there hard by,  
Pointed its beak over the fringed bank ;  
And soon it lightly dipt, and rose, and sank,  
And dipt again, with the young couple's weight,—  
Peona guiding, through the water straight,  
Towards a bowery island opposite ;  
Which gaining presently, she steered light  
Into a shady, fresh, and ripply cove,  
Where nested was an harbour, overwove  
By many a summer's silent fingering ;  
To whose cool bosom she was used to bring



Her playmates, with their needle broidery,  
And minstrel memories of times gone by.

So she was gently glad to see him laid  
Under her favourite bower's quiet shade,  
On her own couch, new made of flower leaves,  
Dried carefully on the cooler side of sheaves  
When last the sun his autumn tresses shook,  
And the tann'd harvesters rich armfuls took.  
Soon was he quieted to slumbrous rest :  
But, ere it crept upon him, he had prest  
Peona's busy hand against his lips,  
And still, a-sleeping, held her finger-tips  
In tender pressure. And as a willow keeps  
A patient watch over the stream that creeps  
Windingly by it, so the quiet maid  
Held her in peace : so that a whispering blade  
Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling  
Down in the bluebells, or a wren light rustling  
Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard.

O magic sleep ! O comfortable bird,  
That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind  
Till it is hush'd and smooth ! O unconfined  
Restraint ! imprison'd liberty ! great key  
To golden palaces, strange minstrelsy,  
Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled caves,  
Echoing grottoes, full of tumbling waves  
And moonlight ; ay, to all the mazy world  
Of silvery enchantment !—who, upfurl'd

Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour,  
But renovates and lives?—Thus, in the bower,  
Endymion was calm'd to life again.

Opening his eyelids with a healthier brain,  
He said: "I feel this thine endearing love  
All through my bosom: thou art as a dove  
Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings  
About me; and the pearliest dew not brings  
Such morning incense from the fields of May,  
As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray  
From those kind eyes,—the very home and haunt  
Of sisterly affection. Can I want

Aught else, aught nearer heaven, than such tears?  
Yet dry them up, in bidding hence all fears  
That, any longer, I will pass my days  
Alone and sad. No, I will once more raise  
My voice upon the mountain-heights; once more  
Make my horn parley from their foreheads hoar:  
Again my trooping hounds, their tongues shall

loll

Around the breathed boar: again I'll poll  
The fair grown yew-tree, for a chosen bow:  
And, when the pleasant sun is getting low,  
Again I'll linger in a sloping mead  
To hear the speckled thrushes, and see feed  
Our idle sheep. So be thou cheered, sweet!  
And, if thy lute is here, softly entreat  
My soul to keep in its resolved course."

Hereat Peona, in their silver source,

Shut her pure sorrow-drops with glad exclaim,  
And took a lute, from which there pulsing came  
A lively prelude, fashioning the way  
In which her voice should wander. 'Twas a lay  
More subtle-cadenced, more forest wild  
Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child ;  
And nothing since has floated in the air  
So mournful strange. Surely some influence rare  
Went, spiritual, through the damsel's hand ;  
For still, with Delphic emphasis, she spann'd  
The quick invisible strings, even though she saw  
Endymion's spirit melt away and thaw  
Before the deep intoxication.

But soon she came, with sudden burst, upon  
Her self-possession—swung the lute aside,  
And earnestly said : “ Brother, 'tis vain to hide  
That thou dost know of things mysterious,  
Immortal, starry ; such alone could thus  
Weigh down thy nature. Hast thou sinn'd in  
aught

Offensive to the heavenly powers ? Caught  
A Paphian dove upon a message sent ?  
Thy deathful bow against some deer-herd bent,  
Sacred to Dian ? Haply, thou hast seen  
Her naked limbs among the alders green ;  
And that, alas ! is death. No, I can trace  
Something more high perplexing in thy face ! ”

Endymion look'd at her, and press'd her hand,  
And said, “ Art thou so pale, who wast so bland

And merry in our meadows? How is this?  
Tell me thine ailment: tell me all amiss!  
Ah! thou hast been unhappy at the change  
Wrought suddenly in me. What indeed more  
strange?

Or more complete to overwhelm surprise?  
Ambition is no sluggard: 'tis no prize,  
That toiling years would put within my grasp,  
That I have sigh'd for: with so deadly gasp  
No man e'er panted for a mortal love.  
So all have set my heavier grief above  
These things which happen. Rightly have they  
done:

I, who still saw the horizontal sun  
Heave his broad shoulder o'er the edge of the  
world,

Out-facing Lucifer, and then had hurl'd  
My spear aloft, as signal for the chase—  
I, who, for very sport of heart, would race  
With my own steed from Araby; pluck down  
A vulture from his towery perching; frown  
A lion into growling, loth retire—  
To lose, at once, all my toil-breeding fire,  
And sink thus low! but I will ease my breast  
Of secret grief, here in this bowery nest.

“This river does not see the raked sky,  
Till it begins to progress silverly  
Around the western border of the wood,  
Whence, from a certain spot, its winding flood

Seems at the distance like a crescent moon :  
And in that nook, the very pride of June,  
Had I been used to pass my weary eyes ;  
The rather for the sun unwilling leaves  
So dear a picture of his sovereign power,  
And I could witness his most kingly hour,  
When he doth tighten up the golden reins,  
And paces leisurely down amber plains  
His snorting four. Now when his chariot last  
Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,  
There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed  
Of sacred dittany, and poppies red :  
At which I wonder'd greatly, knowing well  
That but one night had wrought this flowery spell ;  
And, sitting down close by, began to muse  
What it might mean. Perhaps, thought I, Mor-  
pheus,  
In passing here, his owlet pinions sliook ;  
Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook  
Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,  
Had dipp'd his rod in it : such garland wealth  
Came not by common growth. Thus on I thought,  
Until my head was dizzy and distraught.  
Moreover, through the dancing poppies stole  
A breeze most softly lulling to my soul ;  
And shaping visions all about my sight  
Of colors, wings, and bursts of spangly light ;  
The which became more strange, and strange, and  
dim,  
And then were gulf'd in a tumultuous swim :

And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell  
The enchantment that afterwards befell?  
Yet it was but a dream: yet such a dream  
That never tongue, although it overteem  
With mellow utterance, like a cavern spring,  
Could figure out and to conception bring  
All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay  
Watching the zenith, where the milky way  
Among the stars in virgin splendour pours;  
And travelling my eye, until the doors  
Of heaven appear'd to open for my flight,  
I became loth and fearful to alight  
From such high soaring by a downward glance:  
So kept me steadfast in that airy trance,  
Spreading imaginary pinions wide.  
When, presently, the stars began to glide,  
And faint away, before my eager view:  
At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,  
And dropp'd my vision to the horizon's verge;  
And lo! from opening clouds, I saw emerge  
The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er  
A shell for Neptune's goblet; she did soar  
So passionately bright, my dazzled soul  
Commingle with her argent spheres did roll  
Through clear and cloudy, even when she went  
At last into a dark and vapoury tent—  
Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed train  
Of planets all were in the blue again.  
To commune with those orbs, once more I raised  
My sight right upward: but it was quite dazed

By a bright something, sailing down apace,  
Making me quickly veil my eyes and face :  
Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,  
Who from Olympus watch our destinies !  
Whence that completed form of all completeness ?  
Whence came that high perfection of all sweetness ?

Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where, O  
where

Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair ?  
Not out-sheaves drooping in the western sun ;  
Not—thy soft hand, fair sister ! let me shun  
Such follying before thee—yet she had,  
Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad ;  
And they were simply gordian'd up and braided.  
Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,  
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and orb'd brow ;  
The which were blended in, I know not how,  
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,  
Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs.  
That, when I think thereon, my spirit clings  
And plays about its fancy, till the stings  
Of human neighbourhood envenom all.  
Unto what awful power shall I call ?  
To what high fane ?—Ah ! see her hovering feet,  
More bluely vein'd, more soft, more whitely sweet  
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she rose  
From out her cradle shell. The wind out-blows  
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion ;  
'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a million

Of little eyes, as though thou wert to shed,  
Over the darkest, lushest bluebell bed,  
Handfuls of daisies."—"Endymion, how strange !  
Dream within dream !"—"She took an airy  
range,

And then, towards me, like a very maid,  
Came blushing, waning, willing, and afraid,  
And press'd me by the hand : Ah ! 'twas too  
much ;

Methought I fainted at the charmed touch,  
Yet held my recollection, even as one  
Who dives three fathoms where the waters run  
Gurgling in beds of coral : for anon,  
I felt upmounted in that region  
Where falling stars dart their artillery forth,  
And eagles struggle with the buffeting north  
That balances the heavy meteor-stone ;—  
Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone,  
But lapp'd and lull'd along the dangerous sky.  
Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journeying high,  
And straightway into frightful eddies swoop'd ;  
Such as aye muster where gray time has scoop'd  
Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's side :  
There hollow sounds aroused me, and I sigh'd  
To faint once more by looking on my bliss—  
I was distracted ; madly did I kiss  
The wooing arms which held me, and did give  
My eyes at once to death : but 'twas to live,  
To take in draughts of life from the gold fount  
Of kind and passionate looks ; to count, and count



The moments, by some greedy help that seem'd  
A second self, that each might be redeem'd  
And plunder'd of its load of blessedness.  
Ah, desperate mortal! I even dared to press  
Her very cheek against my crowned lip,  
And, at that moment, felt my body dip  
Into a warmer air: a moment more,  
Our feet were soft in flowers. There was store  
Of newest joys upon that alp. Sometimes  
A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,  
Loiter'd around us; then of honey cells,  
Made delicate from all white-flower bells:  
And once, above the edges of our nest,  
An arch face peep'd,—an Oread as I guess'd.

“Why did I dream that sleep o'erpower'd me  
In midst of all this heaven? Why not see,  
Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,  
And stare them from me? But no, like a  
spark

That needs must die, although its little beam  
Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream  
Fell into nothing—into stupid sleep.  
And so it was, until a gentle creep,  
A careful moving caught my waking ears,  
And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my tears,  
My clenched hands;—for lo! the poppies hung  
Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel sung  
A heavy ditty, and the sullen day  
Had chidden herald Hesperus away,

With leaden looks : the solitary breeze  
Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did tease  
With wayward melancholy ; and I thought,  
Mark me, Peona ! that sometimes it brought  
Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled adieus !—  
Away I wander'd—all the pleasant hues  
Of heaven and earth had faded : deepest shades  
Were deepest dungeons ; heaths and sunny glades  
Were full of pestilent light ; our taintless rills  
Seem'd sooty, and o'erspread with upturn'd gills  
Of dying fish ; the vermeil rose had blown  
In frightful scarlet, and its thorns outgrown  
Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird  
Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and stirr'd  
In little journeys, I beheld in it  
A disguised demon, missioned to knit  
My soul with under darkness ; to entice  
My stumblings down some monstrous precipice :  
Therefore I eager follow'd, and did curse  
The disappointment. Time, that aged nurse,  
Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank gentle heaven  
These things, with all their comfortings, are given  
To my down-sunken hours, and with thee.  
Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea  
Of weary life."

Thus ended he, and both  
Sat silent : for the maid was very loth  
To answer ; feeling well that breathed words  
Would all be lost, unheard, and vain as swords

Against the enchased crocodile, or leaps  
 Of grasshoppers against the sun. She weeps,  
 And wonders ; struggles to devise some blame ;  
 To put on such a look as would say, *Shame*  
*On this poor weakness !* but, for all her strife,  
 She could as soon have crush'd away the life  
 From a sick dove. At length, to break the pause,  
 She said with trembling chance : " Is this the cause ?  
 This all ? Yet it is strange, and sad, alas !  
 That one who through this middle earth should

pass

Most like a sojourning demi-god, and leave  
 His name upon the harp-string, should achieve  
 No higher bard than simple maidenhood,  
 Singing alone, and fearfully,—how the blood  
 Left his young cheek ; and how he used to stray  
 He knew not where : and how he would say, *nay*,  
 If any said 'twas love : and yet 'twas love ;  
 What could it be but love ? How a ring-dove  
 Let fall a sprig of yew-tree in his path  
 And how he died : and then, that love doth  
 scathe

The gentle heart, as northern blasts do roses ;  
 And then the ballad of his sad life closes  
 With sighs, and an alas !—Endymion !  
 Be rather in the trumpet's mouth,—anon  
 Among the winds at large—that all may hearken !  
 Although, before the crystal heavens darken,  
 I watch and dote upon the silver lakes  
 Pictured in western cloudiness, that takes

The semblance of gold rocks and bright gold sands,  
Islands, and creeks, and amber-fretted strands  
With horses prancing o'er them, palaces  
And towers of amethyst,—would I so tease  
My pleasant days, because I could not mount  
Into those regions? The Morpheat fount  
Of that fine element that visions, dreams,  
And fitful whims of sleep are made of, streams  
Into its airy channels with so subtle,  
So thin a breathing, not the spider's shuttle,  
Circled a million times within the space  
Of a swallow's nest-door, could delay a trace,  
A tinting of its quality : how light  
Must dreams themselves be ; seeing they're more  
slight

Than the mere nothing that engenders them !  
Then wherefore sully the entrusted gem  
Of high and noble life with thoughts so sick ?  
Why pierce high-fronted honour to the quick  
For nothing but a dream ? " Hereat the youth  
Look'd up : a conflicting of shame and ruth  
Was in his plaited brow : yet his eyelids  
Widen'd a little, as when Zephyr bids  
A little breeze to creep between the fans  
Of careless butterflies : amid his pains  
He seem'd to taste a drop of manna-dew,  
Full palatable ; and a colour grew  
Upon his cheek, while thus he lifeless spake.

" Peona ! ever have I long'd to slake

My thirst for the world's praises : nothing base,  
No merely slumberous phantasm, could unlace  
The stubborn canvas for my voyage prepared—  
Though now 'tis tatter'd ; leaving my bark bared  
And sullenly drifting : yet my higher hope  
Is of too wide, too rainbow-large a scope,  
To fret at myriads of earthly wrecks.

Wherein lies happiness ? In that which beck  
Our ready minds to fellowship divine,  
A fellowship with essence ; till we shine,  
Full alchemized, and free of space. Behold

The clear religion of heaven ! Fall

A rose-leaf round thy finger's taperness,  
And soothe thy lips : hist ! when the airy stress  
Of music's kiss impregnates the free winds,  
And with a sympathetic touch unbinds  
Æolian magic from their lucid wombs :  
Then old songs waken from enclouded tombs ;  
Old ditties sigh above their father's grave ;  
Ghosts of melodious prophesyings rave  
Round every spot where trod Apollo's foot ;  
Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,  
Where long ago a giant battle was ;  
And, from the turf, a lullaby doth pass  
In every place where infant Orpheus slept.  
Feel we these things !—that moment have we

stept

Into a sort of oneness, and our state  
Is like a floating spirit's. But there are  
Richer entanglements, enthrallments far

More self-destroying, leading, by degrees,  
To the chief intensity : the crown of these  
Is made of love and friendship, and sits high  
Upon the forehead of humanity.

All its more ponderous and bulky worth  
Is friendship, whence there ever issues forth  
A steady splendour ; but at the tip-top,  
There hangs by unseen film, an orb'd drop  
Of light, and that is love : its influence  
Thrown in our eyes genders a novel sense,  
At which we start and fret : till in the end  
Melting into its radiance, we blend.

Mingle, and so become a part of it,—  
Nor with aught else can our souls interknit  
So wingedly : when we combine therewith,  
Life's self is nourish'd by its proper pith,  
And we are nurtured like a pelican brood.  
Ay, so delicious is the unsating food,  
That men, who might have tower'd in the van  
Of all the congregated world, to fan  
And winnow from the coming step of time  
All chaff of custom, wipe away all slime  
Left by men-slugs and human serpentry,  
Have been content to let occasion die,  
Whilst they did sleep in love's Elysium.  
And, truly, I would rather be struck dumb,  
Than speak against this ardent listlessness :  
For I have ever thought that it might bless  
The world with benefits unknowingly ;  
As does the nightingale, up-perched high,

And cloister'd among cool and bunched leaves—  
She sings but to her love, nor e'er conceives  
How tiptoe Night holds back her dark-gray hood.  
Just so may love, although 'tis understood  
The mere commingling of passionate breath,  
Produce more than our searching witnesseth :  
What I know not : but who, of men, can tell  
That flowers would bloom, or that green fruit  
          would swell

To melting pulp, that fish would have bright mail,  
The earth its dower of river, wood, and vale,  
The meadows runnels, runnels pebble-stones,  
The seed its harvest, or the lute its tones,  
Tones ravishment, or ravishment its sweet,  
If human souls did never kiss and greet ?

“ Now, if this earthly love has power to make  
Men's being mortal, immortal ; to shake  
Ambition from their memories, and brim  
Their measure of content ; what merest whim,  
Seems all this poor endeavour after fame,  
To one, who keeps within his steadfast aim  
A love immortal, an immortal too.  
Look not so wilder'd ; for these things are true,  
And never can be born of atomies  
That buzz about our slumbers, like brain-flies,  
Leaving us fancy-sick. No, no, I'm sure,  
My restless spirit never could endure  
To brood so long upon one luxury,  
Unless it did, though fearfully, espy

A hope beyond the shadow of a dream.  
My sayings will the less obscured seem  
When I have told thee how my waking sight  
Has made me scruple whether that same night  
Was pass'd in dreaming. Harken, sweet Peona !  
Beyond the matron-temple of Latona,  
Which we should see but for these darkening  
boughs,

Lies a deep hollow, from whose ragged brows  
Bushes and trees do lean all round athwart,  
And meet so nearly, that with wings outraught,  
And spreaded tail, a vulture could not glide  
Past them, but he must brush on every side.  
Some moulder'd steps lead into this cool cell,  
Far as the slabbed margin of a well,  
Whose patient level peeps its crystal eye  
Right upward, through the bushes, to the sky.  
Oft have I brought thee flowers, on their stalks  
set

Like vestal primroses, but dark velvet  
Edges them round, and they have golden pits :  
'Twas there I got them, from the gaps and slits  
In a mossy stone, that sometimes was my seat,  
When all above was faint with mid-day heat.  
And there in strife no burning thoughts to heed,  
I'd bubble up the water through a reed ;  
So reaching back to boyhood : make me ships  
Of moulted feathers, touchwood, alder chips,  
With leaves stuck in them ; and the Neptune be  
Of their petty ocean. Oftener, heavily,



When lovelorn hours had left me less a child,  
I sat contemplating the figures wild  
Of o'er-head clouds melting the mirror through.  
Upon a day, while thus I watch'd, by flew  
A cloudy Cupid, with his bow and quiver;  
So plainly character'd, no breeze would shiver  
The happy chance: so happy, I was fain  
To follow it upon the open plain,  
And, therefore, was just going; when, behold!  
A wonder, fair as any I have told—  
The same bright face I tasted in my sleep,  
Smiling in the clear well. My heart did leap  
Through the cool depth.—It moved as if to flee—  
I started up, when lo! refreshfully,  
There came upon my face, in plenteous showers,  
Dew-drops, and dewy buds, and leaves, and flowers,  
Wrapping all objects from my smother'd sight,  
Bathing my spirit in a new delight.  
Ay, such a breathless honey-feel of bliss  
Alone preserved me from the drear abyss  
Of death, for the fair form had gone again.  
Pleasure is off a visitant; but pain  
Clings cruelly to us, like the gnawing sloth  
On the deer's tender haunches: late, and loth,  
'Tis scared away by slow returning pleasure.  
How sickening, how dark the dreadful leisure  
Of weary days, made deeper exquisite,  
By a foreknowledge of unslumbrous night!  
Like sorrow came upon me, heavier still,  
Than when I wander'd from the poppy hill:

And a whole age of lingering moments crept  
Sluggishly by, ere more contentment swept  
Away at once the deadly yellow spleen.  
Yes, thrice have I this fair enchantment seen ;  
Once more been tortured with renewed life.  
When last the wintry gusts gave over strife  
With the conquering sun of spring, and left the  
      skies

Warm and serene, but yet with moisten'd eyes  
In pity of the shatter'd infant buds,—  
That time thou didst adorn, with amber studs,  
My hunting-cap, because I laugh'd and smiled,  
Chatted with thee, and many days exiled  
All torment from my breast ;—'twas even then,  
Straying about, yet coop'd up in the den  
Of helpless discontent,—hurling my lance  
From place to place, and following at chance,  
At last, by hap, through some young trees it  
      struck,

And, plashing among bedded pebbles, stuck  
In the middle of a brook,—whose silver ramble  
Down twenty little falls through reeds and bramble,  
Tracing along, it brought me to a cave,  
Whence it ran brightly forth, and white did lave  
The nether sides of mossy stones and rock,—  
'Mong which it gurgled blithe adieus, to mock  
Its own sweet grief at parting. Overhead,  
Hung a lush screen of drooping weeds, and spread  
Thick, as to curtain up some wood-nymph's home  
Ah ! impious mortal, whither do I roam !'

Said I, low-voiced : 'Ah, whither ! 'Tis the grot  
Of Proserpine, when Hell, obscure and hot,  
Doth her resign : and where her tender hands  
She dabbles on the cool and sluicy sands :  
Or 'tis the cell of Echo, where she sits,  
And babbles thorough silence, till her wits  
Are gone in tender madness, and anon,  
Faints into sleep, with many a dying tone  
Of sadness. O that she would take my vows,  
And breathe them sighingly among the boughs,  
To sue her gentle ears for whose fair head,  
Daily, I pluck sweet flowerets from their bed,  
And weave them dyingly—send honey-whispers  
Round every leaf, that all those gentle lispers  
May sigh my love unto her pitying !

O charitable Echo ! hear, and sing  
This ditty to her !—tell her'—So I stay'd  
My foolish tongue, and listening, half afraid,  
Stood stupefied with my own empty folly,  
And blushing for the freaks of melancholy.  
Salt tears were coming, when I heard my name  
Most fondly lipp'd, and then these accents came  
Endymion ! the cave is secreter  
Than the isle of Delos. Echo hence shall stir  
No sighs but sigh-warm kisses, or light noise  
Of thy combing hand, the while it travelling cloy  
And trembles through my labyrinthine hair.'  
At that oppress'd, I hurried in.—Ah ! where  
Are those swift moments ! Whither are they fled ?  
I'll smile no more, Peona ; nor will wed

Sorrow, the way to death ; but patiently  
Bear up against it : so farewell, sad sigh ;  
And come instead demurest meditation,  
To occupy me wholly, and to fashion  
My pilgrimage for the world's dusky brink.  
No more will I count over, link by link,  
My chain of grief : no longer strive to find  
A half-forgetfulness in mountain wind  
Blustering about my ears : ay, thou shalt see,  
Dearest of sisters, what my life shall be ;  
What a calm round of hours shall make my days  
There is a paly flame of hope that plays  
Where'er I look : but yet, I'll say 'tis nought—  
And here I bid it die. Have not I caught,  
Already, a more healthy countenance ?  
By this the sun is setting ; we may chance  
Meet some of our near-dwellers with my car."

This said, he rose, faint-smiling, like a star  
Through autumn mists, and took Peona's hand !  
They stept into the boat, and launch'd from land.

## ENDYMION.

### BOOK II.

O SOVEREIGN power of love ! O grief ! O balm !  
All records, saving thine, come cool, and calm,  
And shadowy, through the mist of passed years :  
For others, good or bad, hatred and tears  
Have become indolent ; but touching thine,  
One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth pine,  
One kiss brings honey-dew from buried days.  
The woes of Troy, towers smothering o'er their  
    blaze,  
Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears, keen  
    blades,  
Struggling, and blood, and shrieks—all dimly fades  
Into some backward corner of the brain ;  
Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain  
The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.  
Hence, pageant history ! hence, gilded cheat !  
Swart planet in the universe of deeds !  
Wide sea, that one continuous murmur breeds  
Along the pebbled shore of memory !  
Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be

Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnified  
 To goodly vessels ; many a sail of pride,  
 And golden-keel'd, is left unlaunch'd and dry.  
 But wherefore this ? What care, though owl did  
     fly

About the great Athenian admiral's mast ?  
 What care, though striding Alexander past  
 The Indus with his Macedonian numbers ?  
 Though old Ulysses tortured from his slumbers  
 The gluttoned Cyclops, what care ?—Juliet lean-  
     ing

Amid her window-flowers,—sighing,—weaning  
 Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,  
 Doth more avail than these : the silver flow  
 Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,  
 Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,  
 Are things to brood on with more ardency  
 Than the death-day of empires. Fearfully  
 Must such conviction come upon his head,  
 Who, thus far, discontent, has dared to tread,  
 Without one muse's smile, or kind behest,  
 The path of love and poesy. But rest,  
 In chating restlessness, is yet more drear  
 Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear  
 Love's standard on the battlements of song.  
 So once more days and nights aid me along,  
 Like legion'd soldiers.

Brain-sick shepherd-prince !  
 What promise hast thou faithful guarded since

The day of sacrifice? Or, have new sorrows  
Come with the constant dawn upon thy morrows?  
Alas! 'tis his old grief. For many days,  
Has he been wandering in uncertain ways:  
Through wilderness, and woods of mossed oaks;  
Counting his woe-worn minutes, by the strokes  
Of the lone wood-cutter; and listening still.  
Hour after hour, to each lush-leaved rill.  
Now he is sitting by a shady spring,  
And elbow-deep with feverous fingering  
Stems the upbursting cold: a wild rose-tree  
Pavilions him in bloom, and he doth see  
A bud which snares his fancy: lo! but now  
He plucks it, dips its stalk in the water: how!  
It swells, it buds, it flowers beneath his sight;  
And, in the middle, there is softly pight  
A golden butterfly; upon whose wings  
There must be surely character'd strange things,  
For with wide eye he wonders, and smiles oft.

Lightly this little herald flew aloft,  
Follow'd by glad Endymion's clasped hands:  
Onward it flies. From languor's sullen bands  
His limbs are loosed, and eager, on he hies  
Dazzled to trace it in the sunny skies.  
It seem'd he flew, the way so easy was;  
And like a new-born spirit did he pass  
Through the green evening quiet in the sun,  
O'er many a heath, through many a woodland  
dun,

Through buried paths, where sleepy twilight  
dreams

The summer time away. One track unseams  
A wooded cleft, and, far away, the blue  
Of ocean fades upon him ; then, anew,

He sinks adown a solitary glen,

Where there was never sound of mortal men,

Saving, perhaps, some snow-light cadences

Melting to silence, when upon the breeze

Some holy bark let forth an anthem sweet,

To cheer itself to Delphi. Still his feet

Went swift beneath the merry-winged gude,

Until it reach'd a splashing fountain's side

That, near a cavern's mouth, for ever pour'd

Unto the temperate air ; then high it soar'd,

And, downward, suddenly began to dip,

As if, athirst with so much toil, 'twould sip

The crystal spout-head : so it did, with touch

Most delicate, as though afraid to smutch,

Even with mealy gold, the waters clear.

But, at that very touch, to disappear

So fairy-quick, was strange ! Bewildered,

Endymion sought around, and shook each  
bed

Of covert flowers in vain ; and then he flung

Himself along the grass. What gentle tongue,

What whisperer, disturb'd his gloomy rest ?

It was a nymph uprisen to the breast

In the fountain's pebbly margin, and she stood

Mong lilies, like the youngest of the brood.



To him her dripping hand she softly kist,  
And anxiously began to plait and twist  
Her ringlets round her fingers, saying: "Youth!  
Too long, alas, hast thou starved on the ruth,  
The bitterness of love: too long indeed,  
Seeing thou art so gentle. Could I weed  
Thy soul of care, by heavens, I would offer  
All the bright riches of my crystal coffer  
To Amphitrite; all my clear-eyed fish,  
Golden, or rainbow-sided, or purplish,  
Vermilion-tail'd, or finn'd with silvery gauze;  
Yea, or my veined pebble-floor, that draws  
A virgin-light to the deep; my grotto-sands,  
Tawny and gold, oozed slowly from far lands  
By my diligent springs: my level lilies, shells,  
My charming-rod, my potent river spells;  
Yes, every thing, even to the pearly cup  
Meander gave me,—for I bubbled up  
To fainting creatures in a desert wild.  
But woe is me, I am but as a child  
To gladden thee; and all I dare to say,  
Is, that I pity thee; that on this day  
I've been thy guide; that thou must wander far  
In other regions, past the scanty bar  
To mortal steps, before thou canst be ta'en  
From every wasting sigh, from every pain,  
Into the gentle bosom of thy love.  
Why it is thus, one knows in heaven above:  
But, a poor Naiad, I guess not. Farewell!  
' have a ditty for my hollow cell."

Hereat she vanish'd from Endymion's gaze,  
Who brooded o'er the water in amaze :  
The dashing fount pour'd on, and where its pool  
Lay, half asleep, in grass and rushes cool,  
Quick waterflies and gnats were sporting still,  
And fish were dimpling, as if good nor ill  
Had fallen out that hour. 'The wanderer,  
Holding his forehead, to keep off the burr  
Of smothering fancies, patiently sat down ;  
And, while beneath the evening's sleepy frown  
Glowworms began to trim their starry lamps,  
Thus breathed he to himself : "Who's en-  
camps

To take a fancied city of delight,  
O what a wretch is he ! and when 'tis his,  
After long toil and travelling, to miss  
The kernel of his hopes, how more than vile !  
Yet, for him there's refreshment even in toil :  
Another city doth he set about,  
Free from the smallest pebble-bead of doubt  
That he will seize on trickling honey-combs :  
Alas ! he finds them dry ; and then he foams,  
And onward to another city speeds.  
But this is human life : the war, the deeds,  
The disappointment, the anxiety,  
Imagination's struggles, far and nigh,  
All human ; bearing in themselves this good,  
That they are still the air, the subtle food,  
To make us feel existence, and to show  
How quiet death is. Where soil is, men grow,

Whether to weeds or flowers ; but for me,  
There is no depth to strike in : I can see  
Nought earthly worth my compassing ; so stand  
Upon a misty, jutting head of land—  
Alone ? No, no ; and by the Orphean lute,  
When mad Eurydice is listening to't,  
I'd rather stand upon this misty peak,  
With not a thing to sigh for, or to seek,  
But the soft shadow of my thrice-seen love,  
Than be—I care not what. O meekest dove  
Of heaven ! O Cynthia, ten-times bright and fair !  
From thy blue throne, now filling all the air,  
Glance but one little beam of temper'd light  
Into my bosom, that the dreadful night  
And tyranny of love be somewhat scared !  
Yet do not so, sweet queen ; one torment spared,  
Would give a pang to jealous misery,  
Worse than the torment's self : but rather tie  
Large wings upon my shoulders, and point out  
My love's far dwelling. Though the playful rout  
Of Cupids shun thee, too divine art thou,  
Too keen in beauty, for thy silver prow  
Not to have dipp'd in love's most gentle stream.  
O be propitious, nor severely deem  
My madness impious ; for, by all the stars  
That tend thy bidding, I do think the bars  
That kept my spirit in are burst—that I  
Am sailing with thee through the dizzy sky !  
How beautiful thou art ! The world how deep !  
How tremulous-dazzlingly the wheels sweep

Around their axle ! Then these gleaming reins,  
How lithe ! When this thy chariot attains  
Its airy goal, haply some bower veils  
Those twilight eyes ? Those eyes !—my spirit  
fails :

Dear goddess, help ! or the wide gaping air  
Will gulf me—help !”—At this, with madden'd  
stare,

And lifted hands, and trembling lips, he stood ;  
Like old Deucalion mountain'd o'er the flood,  
Or blind Orion hungry for the morn.

And, but from the deep cavern there was borne  
A voice, he had been froze to senseless stone ;  
Nor sigh of his, nor plaint, nor passion'd moan  
Had more been heard. Thus swell'd it forth:

"Descend.

Young mountaineer! descend where alleys bend  
Into the sparry hollows of the world!

Oft hast thou seen bolts of the thunder hurl'd  
As from thy threshold; day by day hast been  
A little lower than the chilly sheen

Of icy pinnacles, and dipp'dst thine arms  
Into the deadening ether that still charms

Their marble being: now, as deep profound  
 As those are high, descend! He ne'er is crown'd  
 With immortality, who fears to follow  
 Where airy voices lead: so through the hollow,  
 The silent mysteries of earth, descend!"

He heard but the last words, nor could contend

One moment in reflection : for he fled  
Into the fearful deep, to hide his head  
From the clear moon, the trees, and coming mad-

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'Twas far too strange, and wonderful for sadness ;

Sharpening, by degrees, his appetite  
To dive into the deepest. Dark, nor light,  
The region ; nor bright, nor sombre wholly,  
But mingled up ; a gleaming melancholy ;  
A dusky empire and its diadems ;  
One faint eternal eventide of gems.  
Ay, millions sparkled on a vein of gold,  
Along whose track the prince quick footsteps  
told,

With all its lines abrupt and angular :  
Out-shooting sometimes, like a meteor-star,  
Through a vast antre ; then the metal woof,  
Like Vulcan's rainbow, with some monstrous roof  
Curves hugely : now, far in the deep abyss,  
It seems an angry lightning, and doth hiss  
Fancy into belief : anon it leads  
Through winding passages, where sameness breeds  
Vexing conceptions of some sudden change ;  
Whether to silver grotts, or giant range  
Of sapphire columns, or fantastic bridge  
Athwart a flood of crystal. On a ridge  
Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath  
Towers like an ocean-cliff, and whence he seeth

A hundred waterfalls, whose voices come  
But as the murmuring surge. Chilly and numb  
His bosom grew, when first he, far away,  
Described an orb'd diamond, set to fray  
Old Darkness from his throne : 'twas like the sun  
Uprisen o'er chaos : and with such a stun  
Came the amazement, that, absorb'd in it,  
He saw not fiercer wonders—past the wit  
Of any spirit to tell, but one of those  
Who, when this planet's sphering time doth close  
Will be its high remembrancers : who they ?  
The mighty ones who have made eternal day  
For Greece and England. While astonishment  
With deep-drawn sighs was quieting, he went  
Into a marble gallery, passing through  
A mimic temple, so complete and true  
In sacred custom, that he well might fear'd  
To search it inwards ; whence far off appear'd,  
Through a long pillar'd vista, a fair shrine,  
And, just beyond, on light tiptoe divine,  
A quiver'd Dian. Stepping awfully,  
The youth approach'd ; oft turning his veil'd  
eye  
Down sidelong aisles, and into niches old :  
And, when more near against the marble cold  
He had touch'd his forehead, he began to thread  
All courts and passages, where silence dead,  
Roused by his whispering footsteps, murmur'd  
faint :  
And long he traversed to and fro, to acquaint

Himself with every mystery, and awe ;  
Till, weary, he sat down before the maw  
Of a wide outlet, fathomless and dim,  
To wild uncertainty and shadows grim.  
There, when new wonders ceased to float before,  
And thoughts of self came on, how crude and  
sore

The journey homeward to habitual self !  
A mad pursuing of the fog-born elf,  
Whose flitting lantern, through rude nettle-brier,  
Cheats us into a swamp, into a fire,  
Into the bosom of a hated thing.

What misery most drowningly doth sing  
In lone Endymion's ear, now he has caught  
The goal of consciousness ? Ah, 'tis the thought,  
The deadly feel of solitude : for lo !  
He cannot see the heavens, nor the flow  
Of rivers, nor hill-flowers running wild  
In pink and purple chequer, nor, up-piled,  
The cloudy rack slow journeying in the west,  
Like herded elephants ; nor felt, nor prest  
Cool grass, nor tasted the fresh slumberous air ;  
But far from such companionship to wear  
An unknown time, surcharged with grief, away,  
Was now his lot. And must he patient stay,  
Tracing fantastic figures with his spear ?  
" No ! " exclaim'd he, " why should I tarry here ? "  
No ! loudly echoed times innumerable.  
At which he straightway started, and 'gau tell

His paces back into the temple's chief;  
Warming and glowing strong in the belief  
Of help from Dian: so that when again  
He caught her airy form, thus did he plain,  
Moving more near the while: "O Haunter  
chaste

Of river sides, and woods, and heathy waste,  
Where with thy silver bow and arrows keen  
Art thou now forested? O woodland Queen,  
What smoothest air thy smoother forehead woos?  
Where dost thou listen to the wide halloos  
Of thy departed nymphs? Through what dark  
tree

Glimmers thy crescent? Wheresoe'er it be,  
'Tis in the breath of heaven: thou dost taste  
Freedom as none can taste it, nor dost waste  
Thy loveliness in dismal elements;  
But, finding in our green earth sweet contents,  
There livest blissfully. Ah, if to thee  
It feels Elysian, how rich to me,  
An exiled mortal, sounds its pleasant name!  
Within my breast there lives a choking flame—  
O let me cool it zephyr-boughs among!  
A homeward fever parches up my tongue—  
O let me slake it at the running springs!  
Upon my ear a noisy nothing rings—  
O let me once more hear the linnet's note!  
Before mine eyes thick films and shadows float—  
O let me 'noint them with the heaven's light!  
Dost thou now lave thy feet and ankles white?



O think how sweet to me the freshening sluice !  
 Dost thou now please thy thirst with berry-juice ?  
 O think how this dry palate would rejoice !  
 If in soft slumber thou dost hear my voice,  
 O think how I should love a bed of flowers !—  
 Young goddess ! let me see my native bowers !  
 Deliver me from this rapacious deep !”

Thus ending loudly, as he would o'erleap  
 His destiny, alert he stood : but when  
 Obstinate silence came heavily again,  
 Feeling about for its old couch of space  
 And airy cradle, lowly bow'd his face,  
 Desponding, o'er the marble floor's cold thrill  
 But 'twas not long ; for, sweeter than the rill  
 To its old channel, or a swollen tide  
 To margin shallows, were the leaves he spied,  
 And flowers, and wreaths, and ready myrtle

crowns

Upheaping through the slab : refreshment drowns  
 Itself, and strives its own delights to hide—  
 Nor in one spot alone ; the floral pride  
 In a long whispering birth enchanted grew  
 Before his footsteps ; as when heaved anew  
 Old ocean rolls a lengthen'd wave to the shore,  
 Down whose green back the short-lived foam, all  
     hoar,  
 Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence.

Increasing still in heart, and pleasant sense,

Upon his fairy journey on he hastes ;  
So anxious for the end, he scarcely wastes  
One moment with his hand among the sweets :  
Onward he goes—he stops—his bosom beats  
As plainly in his ear as the faint charm  
Of which the throbs were born. This still alarm,  
This sleepy music, forced him walk tiptoe :  
For it came more softly than the east could  
blow

Arion's magic to the Atlantic isles ;  
Or than the west, made jealous by the smiles  
Of throned Apollo, could breathe back the lyre  
To seas Ionian and Tyrian.

O did he ever live, that lonely man,  
Who loved—and music slew not? 'Tis the pest  
Of love, that fairest joys give most unrest ;  
That things of delicate and tenderest worth  
Are swallow'd all, and made a seared dearth,  
By one consuming flame : it doth immerse  
And suffocate true blessings in a curse.  
Half-happy, by comparison of bliss,  
Is miserable. 'Twas even so with this  
Dew-dropping melody, in the Carian's ear ;  
First heaven, then hell, and then forgotten clear  
Vanish'd in elemental passion.

And down some swart abyssm he had gone,  
Had not a heavenly guide benignant led  
To where thick myrtle branches, 'gainst his head

Brushing, awaken'd : then the sounds again  
Went noiseless as a passing noontide rain  
Over a bower, where little space he stood ;  
For as the sunset peeps into a wood,  
So saw he panting light, and towards it went  
Through winding alleys ; and lo, wonderment.  
Upon soft verdure saw, one here, one there,  
Cupids a-slumbering on their pinions fair.

After a thousand mazes overgone,  
At last, with sudden step, he came upon  
A chamber, myrtle-wall'd, embower'd high,  
Full of light, incense, tender minstrelsy,  
And more of beautiful and strange beside :  
For on a silken couch of rosy pride,  
In midst of all, there lay a sleeping youth  
Of fondest beauty ; fonder, in fair sooth,  
Than signs could fathom, or contentment  
reach :

And coverlids gold-tinted like the peach,  
Or ripe October's faded marigolds,  
Fell sleek about him in a thousand folds—  
Not hiding up an Apollonian curve  
Of neck and shoulder, nor the tenting swerve  
Of knee from knee, nor ankles pointing light ;  
But rather, giving them to the fill'd sight  
Officiously. Sideway his face reposed  
On one white arm, and tenderly unclosed,  
By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth  
To slumbery pout ; just as the morning south

Disparts a dew-lipp'd rose. Above his head  
Four lily stalks did their white honours wed  
To make a coronal; and round him grew  
All tendrils green, of every bloom and hue,  
Together intertwined and trammell'd fresh:  
The vine of glossy sprout; the ivy mesh,  
Shading its Ethiop berries; and woodbine,  
Of velvet-leaves and bugle-blooms divine;  
Convolvulus in streaked vases flush;  
The creeper, mellowing for an autumn blush;  
And virgin's bower, trailing airily;  
With others of the sisterhood. Hard by,  
Stood serene Cupids watching silently.  
One, kneeling to a lyre, touch'd the strings,  
Muffling to death the pithos with his wings;  
And, ever and anon, uprose to look  
At the youth's slumber; while another took  
A willow bough, distilling odorous dew,  
And shook it on his hair; another flew  
In through the woven roof, and fluttering-wise  
Rain'd violets upon his sleeping eyes.

At these enchantments, and yet many more,  
The breathless Latmian wonder'd o'er and o'er;  
Until impatient in embarrassment,  
He forthright pass'd, and lightly treading went  
To that same feather'd lyrist, who straightway,  
Smiling, thus whisper'd: "Though from upper day  
Thou art a wanderer, and thy presence here  
Might seem unholy, be of happy cheer!

For 'tis the nicest touch of human honour,  
When some ethereal and high-favouring donor  
Presents immortal bowers to mortal sense ;  
As now 'tis done to thee, Endymion. Hence  
Was I in no wise startled. So recline  
Upon these living flowers. Here is wine,  
Alive with sparkles—never, I aver,  
Since Ariadne was a vintager,  
So cool a purple : taste these juicy pears,  
Sent me by sad Vertumnus, when his fears  
Were high about Pomona : here is cream,  
Deepening to richness from a snowy gleam ;  
Sweeter than that nurse Amalthea skimm'd  
For the boy Jupiter : and here, undimm'd  
By any touch, a bunch of blooming plums  
Ready to melt between an infant's gums :  
And here is manna pick'd from Syrian trees,  
In starlight, by the three Hesperides.  
Feast on, and meanwhile I will let thee know  
Of all these things around us." He did so,  
Still brooding o'er the cadence of his lyre ;  
And thus : " I need not any hearing tire  
By telling how the sea-born goddess pined  
For a mortal youth, and how she strove to bind  
Him all in all unto her doating self.  
Who would not be so prison'd ? but, fond elf,  
He was content to let her amorous plea  
Faint through his careless arms ; content to see  
An unseized heaven dying at his feet ;  
Content, O fool ! to make a cold retreat,

When on the pleasant grass such love, lovelorn,  
Lay sorrowing ; when every tear was born  
Of diverse passion ; when her lips and eyes  
Were closed in sullen moisture, and quick sighs  
Came vex'd and pettish through her nostrils  
small.

Hush ! no exclaim—yet, justly might'st thou call  
Curses upon his head.—I was half glad,  
But my poor mistress went distract and mad,  
When the boar tusk'd him : so away she flew  
To Jove's high throne, and by her plainings drew  
Immortal tear-drops down the thunderer's beard ;  
Whereon, it was decreed he should be rear'd  
Each summer-time to life. Lo ! this is he,  
That same Adonis, safe in the privacy  
Of this still region all his winter-sleep.  
Ay, sleep ; for when our love-sick queen did weep  
Over his waned corse, the tremulous shower  
Heal'd up the wound, and, with a balmy power,  
Medicined death to a lengthen'd drowsiness :  
The which she fills with visions, and doth dress  
In all this quiet luxury ; and hath set  
Us young immortals, without any let,  
To watch his slumber through. 'Tis well nigh  
pass'd,

Even to a moment's filling up, and fast  
She scuds with summer breezes, to pant through  
The first long kiss, warm firstling, to renew  
Embower'd sports in Cytherea's isle.  
Look, how those winged listeners all this while

Stand anxious : see ! behold !"—This clamant  
word

Broke through the careful silence ; for they heard  
A rustling noise of leaves, and out there flutter'd  
Pigeons and doves : Adonis something mutter'd,  
The while one hand, that erst upon his thigh  
Lay dormant, moved convulsed and gradually  
Up to his forehead. Then there was a hum  
Of sudden voices, echoing, " Come ! come !  
Arise ! awake ! Clear summer has forth walk'd  
Unto the clover-sward, and she has talk'd  
Full soothingly to every nested finch :  
Rise, Cupids ! or we'll give the bluebell pinch  
To your dimpled arms. Once more sweet life  
begin !"

At this, from every side they hurried in,  
Rubbing their sleepy eyes with lazy wrists,  
And doubling overhead their little fists  
In backward yawns. But all were soon alive :  
For as delicious wine doth, sparkling, dive  
In nectar'd clouds and curls through water fair,  
So from the arbour roof down swell'd an air  
Odorous and enlivening ; making all  
To laugh, and play, and sing, and loudly call  
For their sweet queen : when lo ! the wreathed  
green

Disparted, and far upward could be seen  
Blue heaven, and a silver car, air-borne,  
Whose silent wheels, fresh wet from clouds of  
morn,

Spun off a drizzling dew,—which falling chill  
On soft Adonis' shoulders, made him still  
Nestle and turn uneasily about.  
Soon were the white doves plain, with necks  
stretch'd out,  
And silken traces lighten'd in descent ;  
And soon, returning from love's banishment,  
Queen Venus leaning downward open-arm'd :  
Her shadow fell upon his breast, and charm'd  
A tumult to his heart, and a new life  
Into his eyes. Ah, miserable strife,  
But for her comforting ! unhappy sight,  
But meeting her blue orbs ! Who, who can  
write  
Of these first minutes ? The unchariest muse  
To embracements warm as theirs makes coy  
excuse.

O it has ruffled every spirit there,  
Saving love's self, who stands superb to share  
The general gladness : awfully he stands ;  
A sovereign quell is in his waving hands ;  
No sight can bear the lightning of his bow ;  
His quiver is mysterious, none can know  
What themselves think of it ; from forth his eyes  
There darts strange light of varied hues and dyes  
A scowl is sometimes on his brow, but who  
Look full upon it feel anon the blue  
Of his fair eyes run liquid through their souls.  
Endymion feels it, and no more controls



The burning prayer within him ; so, bent low,  
He had begun a plaining of his woe.  
But Venus, bending forward, said : “ My child,  
Favour this gentle youth ; his days are wild  
With love—he—but alas ! too well I see  
Thou know’st the deepness of his misery.

Ah ! smile not so, my son : I tell thee true,  
That when through heavy hours I used to rue  
The endless sleep of this new-born Adon’,  
This stranger eye I pitied. For upon  
A dreary morning once I fled away  
Into the breezy clouds, to weep and pray  
For this my love : for vexing Mars had teased  
Me even to tears : thence, when a little eased,  
Down-looking, vacant, through a hazy wood,  
I saw this youth as he despairing stood :  
Those same dark curls blown vagrant in the  
wind ;

Those same full fringed lids a constant blind  
Over his sullen eyes : I saw him throw  
Himself on wither’d leaves, even as though  
Death had come sudden ; for no jot he moved,  
Yet mutter’d wildly. I could hear he loved  
Some fair immortal, and that his embrace  
Had zoned her through the night. There is no  
trace

Of this in heaven : I have mark’d each cheek,  
And find it is the vainest thing to seek ;  
And that of all things ’tis kept secretest.  
Endymion ! one day thou wilt be blest :

So still obey the guiding hand that fends  
Thee safely through these wonders for sweet  
ends.

'Tis a concealment needful in extreme ;  
And if I guess'd not so, the sunny beam  
Thou shouldst mount up to with me. Now  
adieu !

"Here must we leave thee."—At these words up  
flew

The impatient doves, up rose the floating car,  
Up went the hum celestial. High afar  
The Latmain saw them minish into nought ;  
And, when all were clear vanish'd, still he caught  
A vivid lightning from that dreadful bow.  
When all was darken'd, with Etean thro'e  
The earth closed—gave a solitary moan—  
And left him once again in twilight lone.

He did not rave, he did not stare aghast,  
For all those visions were o'ergone, and past,  
And he in loneliness : he felt assured  
Of happy times, when all he had endured  
Would seem a feather to the mighty prize.  
So, with unusual gladness, on he hies  
Through caves, and palaces of mottled ore,  
Gold dome, and crystal wall, and turquoise floor,  
Black polish'd porticos of awful shade,  
And, at the last, a diamond balustrade,  
Leading afar past wild magnificence,  
Spiral through ruggedest loopholes, and thence

Stretching across a void, then guiding o'er  
Enormous chasms, where all foam and roar,  
Streams subterranean tease their granite beds ;  
Then heighten'd just above the silvery heads  
Of a thousand fountains, so that he could dash  
The waters with his spear ; but at the splash,  
Done heedlessly, those spouting columns rose  
Sudden a poplar's height, and 'gan to inclose  
His diamond path with fretwork streaming round  
Alike, and dazzling cool, and with a sound,  
Haply, like dolphin tumults, when sweet shells  
Welcome the float of Thetis. Long he dwells  
On this delight ; for, every minute's space,  
The streams with changed magic interlace :  
Sometimes like delicatest lattices,  
Cover'd with crystal vines ; then weeping trees,  
Moving about as in a gentle wind,  
Which, in a wink, to watery gauze refined,  
Pour'd into shapes of curtain'd canopies,  
Spangled, and rich with liquid broideries  
Of flowers, peacocks, swans, and naiads fair.  
Swifter than lightning went these wonders rare ;  
And then the water, into stubborn streams  
Collecting, mimick'd the wrought oaken beams,  
Pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof,  
Of those dusk places in times far aloof  
Cathedrals call'd. He bade a loath farewell  
To these founts Protean, passing gulf, and dell,  
And torrent, and ten thousand jutting shapes,  
Half seen through deepest gloom, and grisly gapes,

Blackening on every side, and overhead  
A vaulted dome like heaven's far bespread  
With starlight gems : ay, all so huge and strange  
The solitary felt a hurried change  
Working within him into something dreary,—  
Vex'd like a morning eagle, lost and weary,  
And purblind amid foggy midnight wolds.  
But he revives at once : for who beholds  
New sudden things, nor casts his mental slough ?  
Forth from a rugged arch, in the dusk below,  
Came mother Cybele ! alone—alone—  
In sombre chariot ; dark foldings thrown  
About her majesty, and front death-pale,  
With turrets crown'd. Four maned lions hale  
The sluggish wheels ; solemn their toothed maws,  
Their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws  
Uplifted drowsily, and nerry tails  
Cowering their tawny brushes. Silent sails  
This shadowy queen athwart, and fairs away  
In another gloomy arch.

Wherefore delay,  
Young traveller, in such a mournful place ?  
Art thou wayworn, or canst not further trace  
The diamond path ? And does it indeed end  
Abrupt in middle air ? Yet earthward bend  
Thy forehead, and to Jupiter cloud-borne  
Call ardently ! He was indeed wayworn ;  
Abrupt, in middle air, his way was lost ;  
To cloud-borne Jove he bow'd, and there crost

Towards him a large eagle, 'twixt whose wings,  
Without one impious word, himself he flings,  
Committed to the darkness and the gloom :  
Down, down, uncertain to what pleasant doom,  
Swift as a fathoming plummet down he fell  
Through unknown things ; till exhaled asphodel,  
And rose, with spicy fannings interbreathed,  
Came swelling forth where little caves were  
wreathed

So thick with leaves and mosses, that they seem'd  
Large honeycombs of green, and freshly teem'd  
With airs delicious. In the greenest nook  
The eagle landed him, and farewell took.

It was a jasmine bower, all bestrown  
With golden moss. His every sense had grown  
Ethereal for pleasure ; 'bove his head  
Flew a delight half-graspable ; his tread  
Was Hesperean ; to his capable ears  
Silence was music from the holy spheres ;  
A dewy luxury was in his eyes ;  
The little flowers felt his pleasant sighs  
And stirr'd them faintly. Verdant cave and cell  
He wander'd through, oft wondering at such swell  
Of sudden exaltation : but, "Alas !"   
Said he, " will all this gush of feeling pass  
Away in solitude ? And must they wane,  
Like melodies upon a sandy plain,  
Without an echo ? Then shall I be left  
So sad, so melancholy, so bereft !

Yet still I feel immortal! O my love,  
My breath of life, where art thou? High above,  
Dancing before the morning gates of heaven?  
Or keeping watch among those starry seven,  
Old Atlas' children? Art a maid of the waters,  
One of shell-winding Triton's bright-hair'd daughters?

Or art, impossible! a nymph of Dian's,  
Weaving a coronal of tender scions  
For very idleness? Where'er thou art,  
Methinks it now is at my will to start  
Into thine arms; to scare Aurora's train,  
And snatch thee from the morning; o'er the main  
To scud like a wild bird, and take thee off  
From thy sea-foamy cradle; or to doff  
Thy shepherd vest, and woo thee 'mid fresh leaves.  
No, no, too eagerly my soul deceives  
Its powerless self: I know this cannot be.  
O let me then by some sweet dreaming flee  
To her entrancements: hither sleep awhile!  
Hither most gentle sleep! and soothing foil  
For some few hours the coming solitude."

Thus spake he, and that moment felt endued  
With power to dream deliciously; so wound  
Through a dim passage, searching till he found  
The smoothest mossy bed and deepest, where  
He threw himself, and just into the air  
Stretching his indolent arms, he took, O bliss!  
A naked waist: "Fair Cupid, whence is this?"

A well-known voice sigh'd, "Sweetest, here am I!  
At which soft ravishment, with doting cry  
They trembled to each other.—Helicon!  
O fountain'd hill! Old Homer's Helicon!  
That thou wouldst spout a little streamlet o'er  
These sorry pages; then the verse would soar  
And sing above this gentle pair, like lark  
Over his nested young: but all is dark  
Around thine aged top, and thy clear fount  
Exhales in mists to heaven. Ay, the count  
Of mighty Poets is made up; the scroll  
Is folded by the Muses; the bright roll  
Is in Apollo's hand: our dazed eyes  
Have seen a new tinge in the western skies.  
The world has done its duty. Yet, oh yet,  
Although the sun of poesy is set,  
These lovers did embrace, and we must weep  
That there is no old power left to steep  
A quill immortal in their joyous tears.  
Long time in silence did their anxious fears  
Question that thus it was; long time they lay  
Fondling and kissing every doubt away;  
Long time ere soft caressing sobs began  
To mellow into words, and then there ran  
Two bubbling springs of talk from their sweet lips.  
"O known Unknown! from whom my being sips  
Such darling essence, wherefore may I not  
Be ever in these arms? in this sweet spot  
Pillow my chin for ever? ever press  
These toying hands and kiss their smooth excess?"

Why not for ever and for ever feel  
That breath about my eyes? Ah, thou wilt steal  
Away from me again, indeed, indeed—  
Thou wilt be gone away, and wilt not heed  
My lonely madness. Speak, my kindest fair  
Is—is it to be so? No! Who will dare  
To pluck thee from me? And, of thine own  
will,

Full well I feel thou wouldst not leave me. Still  
Let me entwine thee surer, surer—now  
How can we part? Elysium! Who art thou?  
Who, that thou canst not be for ever here,  
Or lift me with thee to some starry sphere?  
Enchantress! tell me by this soft embrace,  
By the most soft complexion of thy face,  
Those lips, O shippery blisses! twinkling eyes,  
And by these tenderest, milky sovereignties—  
These tenderest, and by the nectar-wine,  
The passion"————"O loved Ida the divine!  
Endymion! dearest! Ah, unhappy me!  
His soul will 'scape us—O felicity!  
How he does love me! His poor temples beat  
To the very tune of love—how sweet, sweet,  
sweet!

Revive, dear youth, or I shall faint and die;  
Revive, or these soft hours will hurry by  
In tranced dullness; speak, and let that spell  
Albright this lethargy! I cannot quell  
Its heavy pressure, and will press at least  
My lips to thine, that they may richly feast



Until we taste the life of love again.  
What ! dost thou move ? dost kiss ? O bliss ! O pain !  
I love thee, youth, more than I can conceive ;  
And so long absence from thee doth bereave  
My soul of any rest : yet must I hence :  
Yet, can I not to starry eminence  
Uplift thee ; nor for very shame can own  
Myself to thee. Ah, dearest ! do not groan,  
Or thou wilt force me from this secrecy,  
And I must blush in heaven. O that I  
Had done it already ! that the dreadful smiles  
At my lost brightness, my impassion'd wiles,  
Had waned from Olympus' solemn height,  
And from all serious Gods ; that our delight  
Was quite forgotten, save of us alone !  
And wherefore so ashamed ? 'Tis but to atone  
For endless pleasure, by some coward blushes :  
Yet must I be a coward ! Horror rushes  
Too palpable before me—the sad look  
Of Jove—Minerva's start—no bosom shook  
With awe of purity—no Cupid pinion  
In reverence veil'd—my crystalline dominion  
Half lost, and all old hymns made nullity !  
But what is this to love ? Oh ! I could fly  
With thee into the ken of heavenly powers,  
So thou wouldst thus, for many sequent hours,  
Press me so sweetly. Now I swear at once  
That I am wise, that Pallas is a dunce—  
Perhaps her love like mine is but unknown—  
Oh ! I do think that I have been alone

In chastity ! yes, Pallas has been sighing,  
While every eye saw me my hair uptying  
With fingers cool as aspen leaves. Sweet love !  
I was as vague as solitary dove,  
Nor knew that nests were built. Now a soft kiss—  
Ay, by that kiss, I vow an endless bliss,  
An immortality of passion's thine :  
Ere long I will exalt thee to the shine  
Of heaven ambrosial ; and we will shade  
Ourselves whole summers by a river glade ;  
And I will tell thee stories of the sky,  
And breathe thee whispers of its minstrelsy,  
My happy love will overwing all bounds !  
O let me melt into thee ! let the sounds  
Of our close voices marry at their birth ;  
Let us entwine hoveringly ! O dearth  
Of human words ! roughness of mortal speech !  
Displays empyrean will I sometimes teach [gasp  
Thine honey'd tongue—lute-breathings which I  
To have thee understand, now while I clasp  
Thee thus, and weep for fondness—I am pain'd,  
Endymion : woe ! woe ! is grief contain'd  
In the very deeps of pleasure, my sole life ?"—  
Hereat, with many sobs, her gentle strife  
Melted into a languor. He return'd  
Entranced vows and tears.

Ye who have yearn'd  
With too much passion, will here stay and pity,  
For the mere sake of truth ; as 'tis a ditty

Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told ·  
By a cavern wind unto a forest old ;  
And then the forest told it in a dream  
To a sleeping lake, whose cool and level gleam  
A poet caught as he was journeying  
To Phoebus' shrine ; and in it he did fling  
His weary limbs, bathing an hour's space,  
And after, straight in that inspired place  
He sang the story up into the air,  
Giving it universal freedom. There  
Has it been ever sounding for those ears  
Whose tips are glowing hot. The legend cheers  
Yon sentinel stars ; and he who listens to it  
Must surely be self-doom'd or he will rue it :  
For quenchless burnings come upon the heart,  
Made fiercer by a fear lest any part  
Should be engulfed in the eddying wind.  
As much as here is penn'd doth always find  
A resting-place, thus much comes clear and  
plain ;  
Anon the strange voice is upon the wane—  
And 'tis but echoed from departing sound,  
That the fair visitant at last unwound  
Her gentle limbs, and left the youth asleep.—  
Thus the tradition of the gusty deep.

Now turn we to our former chroniclers.—  
Endymion awoke, that grief of hers  
Sweet paining on his ear : he sickly guess'd  
How lone he was once more, and sadly press'd

His empty arms together, hung his head,  
And most forlorn upon that widow'd bed  
Sat silently. Love's madness he had known :  
Often with more than tortured lion's groan  
Moanings had burst from him ; but now that rage  
Had pass'd away : no longer did he wage  
A rough-voiced war against the dooming stars.  
No, he had felt too much for such harsh jars :  
The lyre of his soul Eolian tuned  
Forgot all violence, and but communed  
With melancholy thought : O he had swoon'd  
Drunken from pleasure's nipple ! and his love  
Henceforth was dove-like.—Loth was he to move  
From the imprinted couch, and when he did,  
'Twas with slow, languid paces, and face hid  
In muffling hands. So temper'd, out he stray'd  
Half seeing visions that might have dismay'd  
Alecto's serpents ; ravishments more keen  
Than Hermes' pipe, when anxious he did lean  
Over eclipsing eyes : and at the last  
It was a sounding grotto, vaulted, vast,  
O'erstudded with a thousand, thousand pearls,  
And crimson-mouthed shells with stubborn curls,  
Of every shape and size, even to the bulk  
In which whales harbour close, to brood and sulk  
Against an endless storm. Moreover too,  
Fish-semblances, of green and azure hue,  
Ready to snort their streams. In this cool wou-  
der  
Endymion sat down, and 'gan to ponder

On all his life : his youth, up to the day  
When 'mid acclaim, and feasts, and garlands gay,  
He stepp'd upon his shepherd throne : the look  
Of his white palace in wild forest nook,  
And all the revels he had lorded there :  
Each tender maiden whom he once thought fair,  
With every friend and fellow-woodlander—  
Pass'd like a dream before him. Then the spur  
Of the old bards to mighty deeds : his plans  
To nurse the golden age 'mong shepherd clans :  
That wondrous night : the great Pan-festival :  
His sister's sorrow ; and his wanderings all,  
Until into the earth's deep maw he rush'd :  
Then all its buried magic, till it flush'd  
High with excessive love. "And now," thought he,  
"How long must I remain in jeopardy  
Of blank amazements that amaze no more ?  
Now I have tasted her sweet soul to the core,  
All other depths are shallow : essences,  
Once spiritual, are like muddy lees,  
Meant but to fertilize my earthly root,  
And make my branches lift a golden fruit  
Into the bloom of heaven ; other light,  
Though it be quick and sharp enough to blight  
The Olympian eagle's vision, is dark,  
Dark as the parentage of chaos. Hark !  
My silent thoughts are echoing from these shells ;  
Or they are but the ghosts, the dying swells  
Of noises far away ?—list !"—Hereupon  
He kept an anxious ear. The humming tone

Came louder, and behold, there as he lay,  
On either side outgush'd, with misty spray,  
A copious spring ; and both together dash'd  
Swift, mad, fantastic round the rocks, and  
lash'd

Among the conchs and shells of the lofty grot,  
Leaving a trickling dew. At last they shot  
Down from the ceiling's height, pouring a noise  
As of some breathless racers whose hopes poise  
Upon the last few steps, and with spent force  
Along the ground they took a winding course.  
Endymion follow'd—for it seem'd that one  
Ever pursued, the other strove to shun—  
Follow'd their languid mazes, till well nigh  
He had left thinking of the mystery,—  
And was now rapt in tender hoverings  
Over the vanish'd bliss. Ah ! what is it sings  
His dream away ? What melodies are these ?  
They sound as through the whispering of trees,  
Not native in such barren vaults. Give ear !

“O Arethusa, peerless nymph ! why fear  
Such tenderness as mine ? Great Dian, why,  
Why didst thou hear her prayer ? O that I  
Were rippling round her dainty fairness now,  
Circling about her waist, and striving how  
To entice her to a dive ! then stealing in  
Between her luscious lips and eyelids thin.  
O that her shining hair was in the sun,  
And I distilling from it thence to run

In amorous rillets down her shrinking form!  
To linger on her lily shoulders, warm  
Between her kissing breasts, and every charm  
Touch raptur'd!—see how painfully I flow:  
Fair maid, be pitiful to my great woe.  
Stay, stay thy weary course, and let me lead,  
A happy wooer, to the flowery mead  
Where all that beauty snared me.”—“Cruel god,  
Desist! or my offended mistress’ nod  
Will stagnate all thy fountains:—tease me not  
With siren words—Ah, have I really got  
Such power to madden thee? And is it true—  
Away, away, or I shall dearly rue  
My very thoughts: in mercy then away,  
Kindest Alpheus, for should I obey  
My own dear will, ’twould be a deadly bane.”—  
“O, Oread-Queen! would that thou hadst a  
pain

Like this of mine, then would I fearless turn  
And be a criminal.”—“Alas, I burn,  
I shudder—gentle river, get thee hence.  
Alpheus! thou enchanter! every sense  
Of mine was once made perfect in these woods.  
Fresh breezes, bowery lawns, and innocent floods,  
Ripe fruits, and lonely couch, contentment gave:  
But ever since I heedlessly did lave  
In thy deceitful stream, a panting glow  
Grew strong within me: wherefore serve me so,  
And call it love? Alas! ’twas cruelty.  
Not once more did I close my happy eyes

Amid the thrush's song. Away ! avaunt !  
O 'twas a cruel thing."—"Now thou dost taunt  
So softly, Arethusa, that I think  
If thou wast playing on my shady brink,  
Thou wouldst bathe once again. Innocent maid !  
Stifle thine heart no more ;—nor be afraid  
Of angry powers : there are deities  
Will shade us with their wings. Those fitful  
sighs

'Tis almost death to hear : O let me pour  
A dewy balm upon them !—fear no more,  
Sweet Arethusa ! Dian's self must feel,  
Sometimes, these very pangs. Dear maiden,  
steal

Blushing into my soul, and let us fly  
These dreary caverns for the open sky.  
I will delight thee all my winding course,  
From the green sea up to my hidden source  
About Arcadian forests ; and will show  
The channels where my coolest waters flow  
Through mossy rocks ; where 'mid exuberant  
green,

I roam in pleasant darkness, more unseen  
Than Saturn in his exile ; where I brim  
Round flowery islands, and take thence a skim  
Of mealy sweets, which myriads of bees  
Buzz from their honey'd wings : and thou shouldst  
please

Thyself to choose the richest, where we might  
Be incense-pillow'd every summer night.



Doff all sad fears, thou white deliciousness,  
And let us be thus comforted; unless  
Thou couldst rejoice to see my hopeless stream  
Hurry distracted from Sol's temperate beam,  
And pour to death along some hungry sands."—  
"What can I do, Alpheus? Dian stands  
Severe before me: persecuting fate!  
Unhappy Arethusa! thou wast late  
A huntress free in—" At this, sudden fell  
Those two sad streams adown a fearful dell  
The Latmian listen'd, but he heard no more,  
Save echo, faint repeating o'er and o'er  
The name of Arethusa. On the verge  
Of that dark gulf he wept, and said: "I urge  
Thee, gentle Goddess of my pilgrimage,  
By our eternal hopes, to soothe, to assuage,  
If thou art powerful, these lovers' pains;  
And make them happy in some happy plains,"

He turn'd—there was a whelming sound—he  
stept,  
There was a cooler light; and so he kept  
Towards it by a sandy path, and lo!  
More suddenly than doth a moment go,  
The visions of the earth were gone and fled—  
He saw the giant sea above his head.

## ENDYMION.

### BOOK III.

THERE are who lord it o'er their fellow-men  
With most prevailing tinsel : who unpen  
Their bawling vanities, to browse away  
The comfortable green and juicy hay  
From human pastures ; or, O torturing fact !  
Who, through an idiot blink, will see unpack'd  
Fire-branded foxes to sear up and singe  
Our gold and ripe-ear'd hopes. With not one  
tinge

Of sanctuary splendour, not a sight  
Able to face an owl's, they still are dight  
By the blear-eyed nations in empurpled vests,  
And crowns, and turbans. With unladen breasts,  
Save of blown self-applause, they proudly mount  
To their spirit's perch, their being's high account,  
Their tiptop nothings, their dull skies, their  
thrones—

Amid the fierce intoxicating tones  
Of trumpets, shoutings, and belabour'd drums,  
And sudden cannon. Ah ! how all this hums,

In wakeful ears, like uproar past and gone—  
Like thunder-clouds that spake to Babylon,  
And set those old Chaldeans to their tasks.—  
Are then regalities all gilded masks?  
No, there are throned seats unscalable  
But by a patient wing, a constant spell,  
Or by ethereal things that, unconfined,  
Can make a ladder of the eternal wind,  
And poise about in cloudy thunder-tents  
To watch the abyss-birth of elements.  
Ay, 'bove the withering of old-lipp'd Fate  
A thousand Powers keep religious state,  
In water, fiery realm, and airy bourne;  
And, silent as a consecrated urn,  
Hold sphery sessions for a season due.  
Yet few of these far majesties, ah, few!  
Have bared their operations to this globe—  
Few, who with gorgeous pageantry enrobe  
Our piece of heaven—whose benevolence  
Shakes hand with our own Ceres; every sense  
Filling with spiritual sweets to plenitude,  
As bees gorge full their cells. And by the feud  
'Twixt Nothing and Creation, I here swear,  
Eterne Apollo! that thy Sister fair  
Is of all these the gentlier-mightiest.  
When thy gold breath is misting in the west,  
She unobserved steals unto her throne,  
And there she sits most meek and most alone;  
As if she had not pomp subservient;  
As if thine eye, high Poet! was not bent

Towards her with the Muses in thine heart;  
 As if the minist'ring stars kept not apart,  
 Waiting for silver-footed messages.  
 O Moon! the oldest shades 'mong oldest trees  
 Feel palpitations when thou lookest in:  
 O Moon! old boughs lisp forth a holier din  
 The while they feel thine airy fellowship.  
 Thou dost bless everywhere, with silver lip  
 Kissing dead things to life. The sleeping kine,  
 Couch'd in thy brightness, dream of fields divine.  
 Innumerable mountains rise, and rise,  
 Ambitious for the hallowing of thine eyes;  
 And yet thy benediction passeth not  
 One obscure hiding-place, one little spot  
 Where pleasure may be sent: the nested wren  
 Has thy fair face within its tranquil ken,  
 And from beneath a sheltering ivy leaf  
 Takes glimpses of thee; thou art a relief  
 To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps  
 Within its pearly house;—The mighty deeps,  
 The monstrous sea is thine—the myriad sea!  
 O Moon! far spooming Ocean bows to thee,  
 And Tellus feels her forehead's cumbrous load.

Cynthia! where art thou now? What far  
 abode

Of green or silvery bower doth ensbrine  
 Such utmost beauty? Alas, thou dost pine  
 For one as sorrowful: thy cheek is pale  
 For one whose cheek is pale: thou dost bewail

His tears who weeps for thee ! Where dost thou  
sigh ?

Ah ! surely that light peeps from Vesper's eye,  
Or, what a thing is love ! 'Tis She, but lo !

How changed, how full of ache, how gone in  
woe !

She dies at the thinnest cloud ; her loveliness  
Is wan on Neptune's blue : yet there's a stress  
Of love-spangles, just off yon cape of trees,  
Dancing upon the waves, as if to please  
The curly foam with amorous influence.  
O, not so idle ! for down glancing thence,  
She fathoms eddies, and runs wild about  
O'erwhelming water-courses ; scaring out  
The thorny sharks from hiding-holes, and fright'-  
ning

Their savage eyes with unaccustom'd lightning.  
Where will the splendour be content to reach ?  
O love ! how potent hast thou been to teach  
Strange journeyings ! Wherever beauty dwells,  
In gulf or aerie, mountains or deep dells,  
In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun,  
Thou pointest out the way, and straight 'tis  
won.

Amid his toil thou gavest Leander breath ;  
Thou leddest Orpheus through the gleams of  
death ;

Thou madest Pluto bear thin element :  
And now, O winged Chieftain ! thou hast  
sent

A moonbeam to the deep, deep water-world,  
To find Endymion.

On gold sand impearl'd  
With lily shells, and pebbles milky white,  
Poor Cynthia greeted him, and soothed her light  
Against his pallid face : he felt the charm  
To breathlessness, and suddenly a warm  
Of his heart's blood : 'twas very sweet ; he stay'd  
His wandering steps, and half-entranced laid  
His head upon a tuft of straggling weeds,  
To taste the gentle moon, and freshening beads,  
Lash'd from the crystal roof by fishes' tails.  
And so he kept, until the rosy veils  
Manding the east, by Aurora's peering hand  
Were lifted from the water's breast, and fann'd  
Into sweet air ; and sober'd morning came  
Meekly through billows :—when like taper-flame  
Left sudden by a dallying breath of air,  
He rose in silence, and once more 'gan fare  
Along his fated way.

Far had he roam'd,  
With nothing save the hollow vast, that foam'd  
Above, around, and at his feet ; save things  
More dead than Morpheus' imaginings :  
Old rusted anchors, helmets, breastplates large  
Of gone sea-warriors ; brazen beaks and targe ;  
Rudders that for a hundred years had lost  
The sway of human hand ; gold vase emboss'd

With long-forgotten story, and wherein  
No reveller had ever dipp'd a chin  
But those of Saturn's vintage ; mouldering scrolls,  
Writ in the tongue of heaven, by those souls  
Who first were on the earth ; and sculptures  
rude

In ponderous stone, developing the mood  
Of ancient Nox ;—then skeletons of man,  
Of beast, behemoth, and leviathan,  
And elephant, and eagle, and huge jaw  
Of nameless monster. A cold leaden awe  
These secrets struck into him ; and unless  
Dian had chased away that heaviness,  
He might have died : but now, with cheered feel,  
He onward kept ; wooing these thoughts to steal  
About the labyrinth in his soul of love.

“ What is there in thee, Moon ! that thou  
shouldst move

My heart so potently ? When yet a child  
I oft have dried my tears when thou hast smiled.  
Thou seem'dst my sister : hand in hand we went  
From eve to morn across the firmament.  
No apples would I gather from the tree,  
Till thou hadst cool'd their cheeks deliciously :  
No tumbling water ever spake romance,  
But when my eyes with thine thereon could  
dance :

No woods were green enough, no bower divine,  
Until thou liftedst up thine eyelids fine :

In sowing-time ne'er would I dibble take,  
Or drop a seed, till thou wast wide awake ;  
And, in the summer-tide of blossoming,  
No one but thee hath heard me blithely sing  
And mesh my dewy flowers all the night.  
No melody was like a passing spright  
If it went not to solemnize thy reign.  
Yes, in my boyhood, every joy and pain  
By thee were fashion'd to the self-same end ;  
And as I grew in years, still didst thou blend  
With all my ardours ; thou wast the deep  
glen ;  
Thou wast the mountain-top—the sage's pen—  
The poet's harp—the voice of friends—the sun ;  
Thou wast the river—thou wast glory won ;  
Thou wast my clarion's blast—thou wast my  
steed—  
My goblet full of wine—my topmost deed :—  
Thou wast the charm of women, lovely Moon !  
O what a wild and harmonized tune  
My spirit struck from all the beautiful !  
On some bright essence could I lean, and hurl  
Myself to immortality : I prest  
Nature's soft pillow in a wakeful rest.  
But gentle Orb ! there came a nearer bliss—  
My strange love came—Felicity's abyss !  
She came, and thou didst fade, and fade away—  
Yet not entirely ; no, thy starry sway  
Has been an under-passion to this hour.  
Now I begin to feel thine orby power



Is coming fresh upon me : O be kind !  
Keep back thine influence, and do not blind  
My sovereign vision.—Dearest love, forgive  
That I can think away from thee and live !—  
Pardon me, airy planet, that I prize  
One thought beyond thine argent luxuries !  
How far beyond ! ” At this a surprised start  
Frosted the springing verdure of his heart ;  
For as he lifted up his eyes to swear  
How his own goddess was past all things fair,  
He saw far in the concave green of the sea  
An old man sitting calm and peacefully.  
Upon a weeded rock this old man sat,  
And his white hair was awful, and a mat  
Of weeds were cold beneath his cold thin feet ;  
And, ample as the largest winding-sheet,  
A cloak of blue wrapp'd up his aged bones,  
O'erwrought with symbols by the deepest groans  
Of ambitious magic : every ocean-form  
Was woven in with black distinctness ; storm,  
And calm, and whispering, and hideous roar  
Were emblem'd in the woof ; with every shape  
That skims, or dives, or sleeps, 'twixt cape and  
cape.

The gulphing whale was like a dot in the spell,  
Yet look upon it, and 'twould size and swell  
To its huge self ; and the minutest fish  
Would pass the very hardest gazer's wish,  
And show his little eye's anatomy.  
Then there was pictured the regality

Of Neptune ; and the sea-nymphs round his  
state,  
In beauteous vassalage, look up and wait.  
Beside this old man lay a pearly wand,  
And in his lap a book, the which he conn'd  
So steadfastly, that the new denizen  
Had time to keep him in amazed ken,  
To mark these shadowings, and stand in awe.

The old man raised his hoary head and saw  
The wilder'd stranger—seeming not to see,  
His features were so lifeless. Suddenly  
He woke as from a trance ; his snow-white brows  
Went arching up, and like two magic ploughs  
Furrow'd deep wrinkles in his forehead large,  
Which kept as fixedly as rocky marge,  
Till round his wither'd lips had gone a smile.  
Then up he rose, like one whose tedious toil  
Had watch'd for years in forlorn hermitage,  
Who had not from mid-life to utmost age  
Eased in one accent his o'erburden'd soul,  
Even to the trees. He rose : he grasp'd his  
stole,  
With convulsed clenches waving it abroad,  
And in a voice of solemn joy, that awed  
Echo into oblivion, he said :—

“Thou art the man ! Now shall I lay my head  
In peace upon my watery pillow : now  
Sleep will come smoothly to my weary brow.

O Jove ! I shall be young again, be young !  
O shell-borne Neptune, I am pierced and stung  
With new-born life ! What shall I do ? Where  
go,

When I have cast this serpent-skin of woe ?—  
I'll swim to the sirens, and one moment listen  
Their melodies, and see their long hair glisten ;  
Xpon upon that giant's arm I'll be,  
That writhes about the roots of Sicily :  
To northern seas I'll in a twinkling sail,  
And mount upon the shorings of a whale  
To some black cloud ; thence down I'll madly  
sweep

On forked lightning, to the deepest deep,  
Where through some sucking pool I will be hurl'd  
With rapture to the other side of the world !  
O, I am full of gladness ! Sisters three,  
I bow full-hearted to your old decree !  
Yes, every god be thank'd, and power benign,  
For I no more shall wither, droop, and pine.  
Thou art the man !” Endymion started back  
Dismay'd ; and like a wretch from whom the rack  
Tortures hot breath, and speech of agony,  
Mutter'd : “ What lonely death am I to die  
In this cold region ? Will he let me freeze,  
And float my brittle limbs o'er polar seas ?  
Or will he touch me with his searing hand,  
And leave a black memorial on the sand ?  
Or tear me piecemeal with a bony saw,  
And keep me as a chosen food to draw

His magian fish through hated fire and flame?  
 O misery of hell! resistless, tame,  
 Am I to be burn'd up? No, I will shout,  
 Until the gods through heaven's blue look out!—  
 O Tartarus! but some few days ago  
 Her soft arms were entwining me, and on  
 Her voice I hung like fruit among green leaves:  
 Her lips were all my own, and—ah, ripe sheaves  
 Of happiness! ye on the stubble droop,  
 But never may be garner'd. I must stoop  
 My head, and kiss death's foot. Love! love,  
 farewell!

Is there no hope from thee? This horrid spell  
 Would melt at thy sweet breath.—By Dian's  
 hind

Feeding from her white fingers, on the wind  
 I see thy streaming hair! and now, by Pan,  
 I care not for this old mysterious man!”

He spake, and walking to that aged form,  
 Look'd high defiance. Lo! his heart 'gan  
 warm

With pity, for the gray-hair'd creature wept.  
 Had he then wrong'd a heart where sorrow kept?  
 Had he, though blindly contumelious, brought  
 Rheum to kind eyes, a sting to human thought,  
 Convulsion to a mouth of many years?  
 He had in truth; and he was ripe for tears.  
 The penitent shower fell, as down he knelt  
 Before that care-worn sage, who trembling felt

About his large dark locks, and faltering spake :

“ Arise, good youth, for sacred Phœbus’ sake !  
I know thine inmost bosom, and I feel  
A very brother’s yearning for thee steal  
Into mine own : for why ? thou openest  
The prison-gates that have so long oppress’d  
My weary watching. Though thou know’st it not,  
Thou art commission’d to this fated spot  
For great enfranchisement. O weep no more !  
I am a friend to love, to loves of yore :  
Ay, hadst thou never loved an unknown power,  
I had been grieving at this joyous hour.  
But even now, most miserable old,  
I saw thee, and my blood no longer cold  
Gave mighty pulses : in this tottering case  
Grew a new heart, which at this moment plays  
As dancingly as thine. Be not afraid,  
For thou shalt hear this secret all display’d,  
Now as we speed towards our joyous task.”

So saying, this young soul in age’s mask  
Went forward with the Carian side by side :  
Resuming quickly thus ; while ocean’s tide  
Hung swollen at their backs, and jewell’d sands  
Took silently their foot-prints.

“ My soul stands  
Now past the midway from mortality,  
And so I can prepare without a sigh

To tell thee briefly all my joy and pain.  
I was a fisher once, upon this main,  
And my boat danced in every creek and bay;  
Rough billows were my home by night and day,—  
The sea-gulls not more constant; for I had  
No housing from the storm and tempests mad,  
But hollow rocks,—and they were palaces  
Of silent happiness, of slumberous ease:  
Long years of misery have told me so.  
Ay, thus it was one thousand years ago.  
One thousand years!—Is it then possible  
To look so plainly through them? to dispel  
A thousand years with backward glance sublime?  
To breathe away as 'twere all scummy slime  
From off a crystal pool, to see its deep,  
And one's own image from the bottom peep?  
Yes: now I am no longer wretched thrall,  
My long captivity and moanings all  
Are but a slime, a thin-pervading scum,  
The which I breathe away, and thronging come  
Like things of yesterday my youthful pleasures.

“I touch'd no lute, I sang not, trod no measures:  
I was a lonely youth on desert shores.  
My sports were lonely, 'mid continuous roars,  
And craggy isles, and seamews' plaintive cry  
Plaining discrepant between sea and sky.  
Dolphins were still my playmates; shapes un-  
seen  
Would let me feel their scales of gold and green,

Nor be my desolation ; and, full oft,  
When a dread waterspout had rear'd aloft  
Its hungry hugeness, seeming ready ripe  
To burst with hoarsest thunderings, and wipe  
My life away like a vast sponge of fate,  
Some friendly monster, pitying my sad state,  
Has dived to its foundations, gulf'd it down,  
And left me tossing safely. But the crown  
Of all my life was utmost quietude :  
More did I love to lie in cavern rude,  
Keeping in wait whole days for Neptune's voice,  
And if it came at last, hark, and rejoice !  
There blush'd no summer eve but I would steer  
My skiff along green shelving coasts, to hear  
The shepherd's pipe come clear from aery steep,  
Mingled with ceaseless bleatings of his sheep :  
And never was a day of summer shine,  
But I beheld its birth upon the brine :  
For I would watch all night to see unfold  
Heaven's gates, and Æthon snort his morning  
gold  
Wide o'er the swelling streams : and constantly  
At brim of day-tide, on some grassy lea,  
My nets would be spread out, and I at rest.  
The poor folk of the sea-country I blest  
With daily boon of fish most delicate  
They knew not whence this bounty, and elate  
Would strew sweet flowers on a sterile beach.

“ Why was I not contented ? Wherefore reach

At things which, but for thee, O Latmian!  
Had been my dreary death! Fool! I began  
To feel distemper'd longings: to desire  
The utmost privilege that ocean's sire  
Could grant in benediction: to be free  
Of all his kingdom. Long in misery  
I wasted, ere in one extremest fit  
I plunged for life or death. To interknit  
One's senses with so dense a breathing stuff  
Might seem a work of pain; so not enough  
Can I admire how crystal-smooth it felt,  
And buoyant round my limbs. At first I dwelt  
Whole days and days in sheer astonishment;  
Forgetful utterly of self-intent;  
Moving but with the mighty ebb and flow.  
Then, like a new-fledged bird that first doth show  
His spreaded feathers to the morrow chill,  
I tried in fear the pinions of my will.  
'Twas freedom! and at once I visited  
The ceaseless wonders of this ocean-bed.  
No need to tell thee of them, for I see  
That thou hast been a witness—it must be  
For these I know thou canst not feel a drouth,  
By the melancholy corners of that mouth.  
So I will in my story straightway pass  
To more immediate matter. Woe, alas!  
That love should be my bane! Ah, Scylla fair!  
Why did poor Glaucus ever—ever dare  
To sue thee to his heart? Kind stranger-youth!  
I loved her to the very white of truth,



And she would not conceive it. Timid thing!  
She fled me swift as sea-bird on the wing,  
Round every isle, and point, and promontory,  
From where large Hercules wound up his story  
Far as Egyptian Nile. My passion grew  
The more, the more I saw her dainty hue  
Gleam delicately through the azure clear:  
Until 'twas too fierce agony to bear;  
And in that agony, across my grief  
It flash'd, that Circe might find some relief—  
Cruel enchantress! So above the water  
I rear'd my head, and look'd for Phœbus' daughter.

Dea's isle was wondering at the moon:—  
It seem'd to whirl around me, and a swoon  
Left me dead-drifting to that fatal power

“When I awoke, 'twas in a twilight bower;  
Just when the light of morn, with hum of bees,  
Stole through its verdurous matting of fresh trees.  
How sweet, and sweeter! for I heard a lyre,  
And over it a sighing voice expire.  
It ceased—I caught light footsteps; and anon  
The fairest face that morn e'er look'd upon  
Push'd through a screen of roses. Starry Jove!  
With tears, and smiles, and honey-words she wove  
A net whose thralldom was more bliss than all  
The range of flower'd Elysium. Thus did fall  
The dew of her rich speech: ‘Ah! art awake?  
O let me hear thee speak, for Cupid's sake!

I am so oppress'd with joy ! Why, I have shed  
 An urn of tears, as though thou wert cold dead  
 And now I find thee living, I will pour  
 From these devoted eyes their silver store,  
 Until exhausted, of the latest drop,  
 So it will pleasure thee, and force thee stop  
 Here, that I too may live : but if beyond  
 Such cool and sorrowful offerings, thou art fond  
 Of soothing warmth, of dalliance supreme ;  
 If thou art ripe to taste a long love-dream ;  
 If smiles, if dimples, tongues for ardour mute,  
 Hang in thy vision like a tempting fruit,  
 O let me pluck it for thee ! ' Thus she link'd  
 Her charming syllables, till indistinct  
 Their music came to my o'er-sweeten'd soul ;  
 And then she hover'd over me, and stole  
 So near, that if no nearer it had been  
 This furrow'd visage thou hadst never seen.

“ Young man of Latmos ! thus particular  
 Am I, that thou may'st plainly see how far  
 This fierce temptation went : and thou may'st not  
 Exclaim, How, then, was Scylla quite forgot ?

“ Who could resist ? Who in this universe ?  
 She did so breathe ambrosia ; so immerse  
 My fine existence in a golden clime.  
 She took me like a child of suckling time,  
 And cradled me in roses. Thus condemn'd,  
 The current of my former life was stemm'd,

And to this arbitrary queen of sense  
 I bow'd a tranced vassal : nor would thence  
 Have moved, even though Amphion's harp had  
                   woo'd

Me back to Scylla o'er the billows rude.  
 For as Apollo each eve doth devise  
 A new apparelling for western skies ;  
 So every eve, nay, every spendthrift hour  
 Shed balmy consciousness within that bower.  
 And I was free of haunts umbrageous ;  
 Could wander in the mazy forest-house  
 Of squirrels, foxes shy, and antler'd deer,  
 And birds from coverts innermost and drear  
 Warbling for very joy mellifluous sorrow—  
 'To me new-born delights !

“ Now let me borrow,

For moments few, a temperament as stern  
 As Pluto's sceptre, that my words not burn  
 These uttering lips, while I in calm speech tell  
 How specious heaven was changed to real hell.

“ One morn she left me sleeping : half awake  
 I sought for her smooth arms and lips, to slake  
 My greedy thirst with nectarous camel-draughts ,  
 But she was gone. Whereat the barbed shafts  
 Of disappointment stuck in me so sore,  
 That out I ran and search'd the forest o'er.  
 Wandering about in pine and cedar gloom  
 Damp awe assail'd me, for there 'gan to boom

A sound of moan, an agony of sound,  
Sepulchral from the distance all around.  
Then came a conquering earth-thunder, and rum-  
bled

That fierce complain to silence : while I stum-  
bled

Down a precipitous path, as if impell'd.  
I came to a dark valley.—Groanings swell'd  
Poisonous about my ears, and louder grew,  
The nearer I approach'd a flame's gaunt blue,  
That glared before me through a thorny brake.  
This fire, like the eye of gordian snake,  
Bewitch'd me towards ; and I soon was near  
A sight too fearful for the feel of fear :  
In thicket hid I curs'd the haggard scene—  
The banquet of my arms, my arbour queen,  
Seated upon an uptorn forest root ;  
And all around her shapes, wizzard and brute,  
Laughing, and wailing, grovelling, serpentine,  
Showing tooth, tusk, and venom-bag, and sting.  
O such deformities ! old Charon's self,  
Should he give up awhile his penny pelf,  
And take a dream 'mong rushes Stygian,  
It could not be so fantasied. Fierce, wan,  
And tyrannizing was the lady's look,  
As over them a gnarled staff she shook.  
Of times upon the sudden she laugh'd out,  
And from a basket emptied to the rout  
Clusters of grapes, the which they raven'd quick  
And roar'd for more ; with many a hungry lick

About their shaggy jaws: Avenging, slow,  
Anon she took a branch of mistletoe,  
And emptied on 't a black duli-gurgling phial:  
Groan'd one and all, as if some piercing trial  
Was sharpening for their pitiable bones.  
She lifted up the charm: appealing groans  
From their poor breasts went suing to her ear  
In vain; remorseless as an infant's bier  
She whisk'd against their eyes the sooty oil.  
Whereat was heard a noise of painful toil,  
Increasing gradual to a tempest rage,  
Shrieks, yells, and groans of torture-pilgrimage;  
Until their griev'd bodies 'gan to bloat  
And puff from the tail's end to stifled throat:  
Then was appalling silence: then a sight  
More wildering than all that hoarse affright;  
For the whole herd, as by a whirlwind writhen,  
Went through the dismal air like one huge

Python

Antagonizing Boreas,—and so vanish'd,  
Yet there was not a breath of wind: she banish'd  
These phantoms with a nod. Lo! from the dark  
Came waggish fauns, and nymphs, and satyrs  
stark,

With dancing and loud revelry,—and went  
Swifter than centaurs after rapine bent.—  
Sighing an elephant appear'd and bow'd  
Before the fierce witch, speaking thus aloud  
In human accent: 'Potent goddess! chief  
Of pains resistless! make my being brief,

Or let me from this heavy prison fly :  
Or give me to the air, or let me die !  
I sue not for my happy crown again ;  
I sue not for my phalanx on the plain ;  
I sue not for my lone, my widow'd wife :  
I sue not for my ruddy drops of life,  
My children fair, my lovely girls and boys !  
I will forget them ; I will pass these joys ;  
Ask nought so heavenward, so too—too high :  
Only I pray, as fairest boon, to die,  
Or be deliver'd from this cumbrous flesh,  
From this gross, detestable, filthy mesh,  
And merely given to the cold bleak air.  
Have mercy, Goddess ! Circe, feel my prayer !'

' That curst magician's name fell icy numb  
Upon my wild conjecturing : truth had come  
Naked and sabre-like against my heart.  
I saw a fury whetting a death-dart ;  
And my slain spirit, overwrought with fright,  
Fainted away in that dark lair of night.  
Think, my deliverer, how desolate  
My waking must have been ! disgust and  
hate,  
And terrors manifold divided me  
A spoil amongst them. I prepared to flee  
Into the dungeon core of that wild wood :  
I fled three days—when lo ! before me stood  
Glaring the angry witch. O Dis, even now,  
A clammy dew is beading on my brow,

At mere remembering her pale laugh, and curse.  
‘Ha . ha ! Sir Dainty ! there must be a nurse  
Made of rose-leaves and thistle-down, express,  
To cradle thee, my sweet, and lull thee : yes,  
I am too flinty-hard for thy nice touch :  
My tenderest squeeze is but a giant’s clutch.  
So, fairy-thing, it shall have lullabies  
Unheard of yet ; and it shall still its cries  
Upon some breast more lily-feminine.  
Oh, no—it shall not pine, and pine, and pine  
More than one pretty, trifling thousand years ;  
And then ’twere pity, but fate’s gentle shears  
Cut short its immortality. Sea-firt !  
Young dove of the waters ! truly I’ll not hurt  
One hair of thine : see how I weep and sigh,  
That our heart-broken parting is so nigh.  
And must we part ? Ah, yes, it must be so.  
Yet ere thou leavest me in utter woe,  
Let me sob over thee my last adieus,  
And speak a blessing : Mark me ! thou hast thews  
Immortal, for thou art of heavenly race :  
But such a love is mine, that here I chase  
Eternally away from thee all bloom  
Of youth, and destine thee towards a tomb,  
Hence shalt thou quickly to the watery vast ;  
And there, ere many days be overpast,  
Disabled age shall seize thee ; and even then  
Thou shalt not go the way of aged men ;  
But live and wither, cripple and still breathe  
Ten hundred years : which gone, I then bequeathe

Thy fragile bones to unknown burial.  
Adieu, sweet love, adieu!—As shot stars fall,  
She fled ere I could groan for mercy. Stung  
And poison'd was my spirit: despair sung  
A war-song of defiance 'gainst all hell.  
A hand was at my shoulder to compel  
My sullen steps; another 'fore my eyes  
Moved on with pointed finger. In this guise  
Enforced, at the last by ocean's foam  
I found me; by my fresh, my native home,  
Its tempering coolness, to my life akin,  
Came salutary as I waded in;  
And, with a blind voluptuous rage, I gave  
Battle to the swollen billow-ridge, and drove  
Large froth before me, while there yet remain'd  
Hale strength, nor from my bones all marrow  
drain'd.

“Young lover, I must weep—such hellish  
spite  
With dry cheek who can tell? While thus my  
might  
Proving upon this element, dismay'd,  
Upon a dead thing's face my hand I laid;  
I look'd—'twas Scylla! Cursed, cursed Circe!  
O vulture-witch, hast never heard of mercy!  
Could not thy harshest vengeance be content,  
But thou must nip this tender innocent  
Because I loved her?—Cold, O cold indeed  
Were her fair limbs, and like a common weed



The sea-swell took her hair. Dead as she was  
I clung about her waist, nor ceased to pass  
Fleet as an arrow through unfathom'd brine,  
Until there shone a fabric crystalline,  
Ribb'd and inlaid with coral, pebble, and pearl.  
Headlong I darted; at one eager swirl  
Gain'd its bright portal, enter'd, and behold!  
'Twas vast, and desolate, and icy-cold;  
And all around—But wherefore this to thee  
Who in few minutes more thyself shalt see?—  
I left poor Scylla in a niche and fled.  
My fever'd parchings up, my scathing dread  
Met palsy half way: soon these limbs became  
Gaunt, wither'd, sapless, feeble, cramp'd, and  
lame.

“Now let me pass a cruel, cruel space,  
Without one hope, without one faintest trace  
Of mitigation, or redeeming bubble  
Of colour'd phantasy: for I fear 'twould trouble  
Thy brain to loss of reason: and next tell  
How a restoring chance came down to quell  
One half of the witch in me.

“On a day,  
Sitting upon a rock above the spray,  
I saw grow up from the horizon's brink  
A gallant vessel: soon she seem'd to sink  
Away from me again, as though her course  
Had been resumed in spite of hindering force—

So vanish'd . and not long, before arose  
 Dark clouds, and muttering of winds morose,  
 Old Æolus would stifle his mad spleen,  
 But could not; therefore, all the billows green  
 'Toss'd up the silver spume against the clouds.  
 The tempest came : I saw that vessel's shrouds  
 In perilous bustle ; while upon the deck  
 Stood trembling creatures. I beheld the wreck ;  
 The final gulping ; the poor struggling souls ;  
 I heard their cries amid loud thunder-rolls.  
 O they had all been saved but crazed old  
 Annul'd my vigorous cravings ; and thus quell'd  
 And curb'd, think on 't, O Latmian ! did I sit  
 Writhing with pity, and a cursing fit  
 Against that hell-born Circe. The crew had  
     gone,  
 By one and one, to pale oblivion ;  
 And I was gazing on the surges prone,  
 With many a scalding tear, and many a groan,  
 When at my feet emerged an old man's hand,  
 Grasping this scroll, and this same slender wand  
 I knelt with pain—reach'd out my hand—had  
     grasp'd  
 These treasures—touch'd the knuckles—they  
     unclasp'd—  
 I caught a finger : but the downward weight  
 O'erpower'd me—it sank. Then 'gan abate  
 The storm, and through chill aguish gloom out-  
     burst  
 The comfortable sun. I was athirst

To search the book, and in the warming air  
Parted its dripping leaves with eager care.  
Strange matters did it treat of, and drew on  
My soul page after page, till well nigh won  
Into forgetfulness ; when, stupefied,  
I read these words, and read again, and tried  
My eyes against the heavens, and read again.  
O what a load of misery and pain  
Each Atlas-line bore off !—a shine of hope  
Came gold around me, cheering me to cope  
Strenuous with hellish tyranny. Attend !  
For thou hast brought their promise to an end

“ ‘ In the wide sea there lives a forlorn wretch,  
Doom’d with enfeebled carcase to outstretch  
His loathed existence through ten centuries,  
And then to die alone. Who can devise  
A total opposition ? No one. So  
One million times ocean must ebb and flow,  
And he oppressed. Yet he shall not die,  
These things accomplish’d :—If he utterly  
Scans all the depths of magic, and expounds  
The meanings of all motions, shapes, and  
sounds ;  
If he explores all forms and substances  
Straight homeward to their symbol-essences ;  
He shall not die. Moreover, and in chief,  
He must pursue this task of joy and grief  
Most piously ;—all lovers tempest-tost,  
And in the savage overwhelming lost,

He shall deposit side by side, until  
Time's creeping shall the dreary space fulfil:  
Which done, and all these labours ripened,  
A youth, by heavenly power loved and led,  
Shall stand before him; whom he shall direct  
How to consummate all. The youth elect  
Must do the thing, or both will be destroy'd."

"Then," cried the young Endymion, over-  
joy'd,

"We are twin brothers in this destiny!  
Say, I entreat thee, what achievement high  
Is, in this restless world, for me reserved.  
What! if from thee my wandering feet had  
swerved,

Had we both perish'd?"—"Look!" the sage  
replied,

"Dost thou not mark a gleaming through the  
tide,

Of divers brilliances? 'tis the edifice  
I told thee of, where lovely Scylla lies;  
And where I have enshrined piously  
All lovers, whom fell storms have doom'd to die  
Throughout my bondage." Thus discoursing, on  
They went till unobscured the porches shone;  
Which hurryingly they gain'd, and enter'd  
straight.

Sure never since king Neptune held his state  
Was seen such wonder underneath the stars.  
Turn to some level plain where haughty Mars

Has legion'd all his battle; and behold  
How every soldier, with firm foot, doth hold  
His even breast: see, many steeled squares,  
And rigid ranks of iron—whence who dares  
One step? Imagine further, line by line,  
These warrior thousands on the field supine:—  
So in that crystal place, in silent rows,  
Poor lovers lay at rest from joys and woes.  
The stranger from the mountains, breathless,  
traced

Such thousands of shut eyes in order placed;  
Such ranges of white feet, and patient lips  
All ruddy,—for here death no blossom nips.  
He mark'd their brows and foreheads; saw their  
hair

Put sleekly on one side with nicest care;  
And each one's gentle wrists, with reverence,  
Put cross-wise to its heart.

“Let us commence  
(Whisper'd the guide, stuttering with joy) even  
now.”

He spake, and, trembling like an aspen-bough,  
Began to tear his scroll in pieces small,  
Uttering the while some mumblings funeral.  
He tore it into pieces small as snow  
That drifts unfeather'd when bleak northerns  
blow;  
And having done it, took his dark blue cloak  
And bound it round Endymion: then struck

His wand against the empty air times nine.  
"What more there is to do, young man, is  
thine :

But first a little patience ; first undo  
This tangled thread, and wind it to a clue.  
Ah, gentle ! 'tis as weak as spider's skein ;  
And shouldst thou break it—What, is it done so  
clean ?

A power overshadows thee ! Oh, brave !  
The spite of hell is tumbling to its grave.  
Here is a shell ; 'tis pearly blank to me,  
Nor mark'd with any sign or character—  
Canst thou read aught ? O read for pity's sake !  
Olympus ! we are safe ! Now, Carian, break  
This wand against yon lyre on the pedestal."

'Twas done : and straight with sudden swell  
and fall

Sweet music breathed her soul away, and sigh'd  
A lullaby to silence.—"Youth ! now strew  
These minced leaves on me, and passing through  
Those files of dead, scatter the same around,  
And thou wilt see the issue."—'Mid the sound  
Of flutes and viols, ravishing his heart,  
Endymion from Glaucus stood apart,  
And scatter'd in his face some fragments light.  
How lightning-swift the change ! a youthful  
wight

Smiling beneath a coral diadem,  
Out-sparkling sudden like an upturn'd gem,

Appear'd, and, stepping to a beauteous corse,  
Kneel'd down beside it, and with tenderest force  
Press'd its cold hand, and wept—and Scylla  
sigh'd !

Endymion, with quick hand, the charm applied—  
The nymph arose : he left them to their joy,  
And onward went upon his high employ,  
Showering those powerful fragments on the  
dead,

And, as he pass'd, each lifted up its head,  
As doth a flower at Apollo's touch.

Death felt it to his inwards ; 'twas too much :

Death fell a-weeping in his charnel-house.

The Latmian persevered along, and thus

All were reanimated. There arose

A noise of harmony, pulses and throes

Of gladness in the air—while many, who

Had died in mutual arms devout and true,

Sprang to each other madly ; and the rest

Felt a high certainty of being blest.

They gazed upon Endymion. Enchantment

Grew drunken, and would have its head and  
bent.

Delicious symphonies, like airy flowers,

Budded, and swell'd, and, full-blown, shed full  
showers

Of light, soft, unseen leaves of sounds divine.

The two deliverers tasted a pure wine

Of happiness, from fairy press oozed out.

Speechless they eyed each other, and about

The fair assembly wander'd to and fro,  
Distracted with the richest overflow  
Of joy that ever pour'd from heaven.

——“Away!”

Shouted the new-born god; “Follow, and pay  
Our piety to Neptunus supreme!”—  
Then Scylla, blushing sweetly from her dream,  
They led on first, bent to her meek surprise,  
Through portal columns of a giant size  
Into the vaulted, boundless emerald.  
Joyous all follow'd, as the leader call'd,  
Down marble steps; pouring as easily  
As hour-glass sand—and fast, as you might see  
Swallows obeying the south summer's call,  
Or swans upon a gentle waterfall.

Thus went that beautiful multitude, nor far,  
Ere from among some rocks of glittering spar,  
Just within ken, they saw descending thick  
Another multitude. Whereat more quick  
Moved either host. On a wide sand they met,  
And of those numbers every eye was wet;  
For each their old love found. A murmuring rose  
Like what was never heard in all the throes  
Of wind and waters: 'tis past human wit  
To tell; 'tis dizziness to think of it.

This mighty consummation made, the host  
Moved on for many a league; and gain'd and lost



Huge sea-marks ; vanward swelling in array,  
And from the rear diminishing away,  
Till a faint dawn surprised them. Glaucus  
cried,

“ Behold ! behold, the palace of his pride !  
God Neptune’s palaces.” With noise increased,  
They shoulder’d on towards that brightening  
east.

At every onward step proud domes arose  
In prospect, diamond gleams and golden glows  
Of amber ’gainst their faces levelling.  
Joyous, and many as the leaves in spring,  
Still onward ; still the splendour gradual swell’d.  
Rich opal domes were seen, on high upheld  
By jasper pillars, letting through their shafts  
A blush of coral. Copious wonder-draughts  
Each gazer drank ; and deeper drank more near :  
For what poor mortals fragment up, as mere  
As marble was there lavish, to the vast  
Of one fair palace, that far, far surpass’d,  
Even for common bulk, those olden three,  
Memphis, and Babylon, and Nineveh.

As large, as bright, as colour’d as the bow  
Of Iris, when unfading it doth show  
Beyond a silvery shower, was the arch  
Through which this Paphian army took its  
march,  
Into the outer courts of Neptune’s state :  
Whence could be seen, direct, a golden gate,

To which the leaders sped ; but not half raught  
Ere it burst open swift as fairy thought,  
And made those dazzled thousands veil their  
eyes

Like callow eagles at the first sunrise.  
Soon with an eagle nativeness their gaze  
Ripe from hue-golden swoons took all the blaze,  
And then, behold ! large Neptune on his throne  
Of emerald deep : yet not exalt alone ;  
At his right hand stood winged Love, and on  
His left sat smiling Beauty's paragon.

Far as the mariner on highest mast  
Can see all round upon the calmed vast,  
So wide was Neptune's hall : and as the blue  
Doth vault the waters, so the waters drew  
Their doming curtains, high, magnificent,  
Awed from the throne aloof ;—and when storm-  
rent

Disclosed the thunder-gloomings in Jove's air ;  
But soothed as now, flash'd sudden everywhere,  
Noiseless, sub-marine cloudlets, glittering  
Death to a human eye : for there did spring  
From natural west, and east, and south, and  
north,

A light as of four sunsets, blazing forth  
A gold-green zenith 'bove the Sea-God's head.  
Of lucid depth the floor, and far outspread  
As breezeless lake, on which the slim canoe  
Of feather'd Indian darts about, as through

The delicatest air : air verily,  
But for the portraiture of clouds and sky :  
This palace floor breath-air,—but for the amaze  
Of deep-seen wonders motionless,—and blaze  
Of the dome pomp, reflected in extremes,  
Globing a golden sphere.

They stood in dreams

Till Triton blew his horn. The palace rang ;  
The Nereids danced ; the Sirens faintly sang ;  
And the great Sea-King bow'd his dripping head.  
Then Love took wing, and from his pinions shed  
On all the multitude a nectarous dew.

The ooze-born Goddess beckoned and drew  
Fair Scylla and her guides to conference ;  
And when they reach'd the throned eminence  
She kiss'd the sea-nymph's cheek, who sat her  
down

A toying with the doves. Then, "Mighty  
crown

And sceptre of this kingdom !" Venus said,  
"Thy vows were on a time to Nais paid :  
Behold !"—Two copious tear-drops instant fell  
From the God's large eyes ; he smiled delectable,  
And over Glaucus held his blessing hands.—  
"Endymion ! Ah ! still wandering in the bands  
Of love ? Now this is cruel. Since the hour  
I met thee in earth's bosom, all my power  
Have I put forth to serve thee. What, not yet  
Escaped from dull mortality's harsh net ?

A little patience, youth! 'twill not be long,  
 Or I am skillless quite: an idle tongue,  
 A humid eye, and steps luxurious,

Where these are new and strange, are ominous.

Ay, I have seen these signs in one of heaven,  
 When others were all blind; and were I given  
 To utter secrets, haply I might say  
 Some pleasant words: but Love will have his  
                   day.

So wait awhile expectant. Pr'ythee soon,  
 Even in the passing of thine honey-moon,  
 Visit my Cytherea: thou wilt find  
 Cupid well-natured, my Adonis kind;  
 And pray persuade with thee—Ah, I have done,  
 All blisses be upon thee, my sweet son!”—

Thus the fair Goddess: while Endymion  
 Knelt to receive those accents halcyon.

Meantime a glorious revelry began  
 Before the Water Monarch. Nectar ran  
 In courteous fountains to all cups outreach'd;  
 And plunder'd vines, teeming exhaustless,  
                   pleach'd  
 New growth about each shell and pendent lyre;  
 The which, in entangling for their fire,  
 Pull'd down fresh foliage and coverture  
 For dainty toy. Cupid, empire-sure,  
 Flutter'd and laugh'd, and oft-times through the  
                   throng  
 Made a delighted way. Then dance, and song,

And garlanding, grew wild ; and pleasure reign'd.  
 In harmless tendrils they each other chain'd,  
 And strove who should be smother'd deepest in  
 Fresh crush of leaves.

O 'tis a very sin

For one so weak to venture his poor verse  
 In such a place as this. O do not curse,  
 High Muses ! let him hurry to the ending.

All suddenly were silent. A soft blending  
 Of dulcet instruments came charmingly ;  
 And then a hymn.

“ King of the stormy sea !

Brother of Jove, and co-inheritor  
 Of elements ! Eternally before  
 Thee the waves awful bow. Fast, stubborn  
 rock,

At thy fear'd trident shrinking, doth unlock  
 Its deep foundations, hissing into foam.  
 All mountain-rivers lost, in the wide home  
 Of thy capacious bosom ever flow.  
 Thou frownest, and old Æolus thy foe  
 Skulks to his cavern, 'mid the gruff complaint  
 Of all his rebel tempests. Dark clouds faint  
 When, from thy diadem, a silver gleam  
 Slants over blue dominion. Thy bright team  
 Gulfs in the morning light, and scuds along  
 To bring thee nearer to that golden song

Apollo singeth, while his chariot  
 Waits at the doors of heaven. Thou art not  
 For scenes like this : an empire stern hast thou ;  
 And it hath furrow'd that large front : yet now,  
 As newly come of heaven, dost thou sit  
 To blend and interknit  
 Subdued majesty with this glad time.  
 O shell-born King sublime !  
 We lay our hearts before thee evermore—  
 We sing, and we adore !

“ Breathe softly, flutes ;  
 Be tender of your strings, ye soothing lutes ;  
 Nor be the trumpet heard ! O vain, O vain !  
 Not flowers budding in an April rain,  
 Nor breath of sleeping dove, nor river's flow—  
 No, nor the Æolian twang of Love's own bow,  
 Can mingle music fit for the soft ear  
 Of goddess Cytherea !  
 Yet deign, white Queen of Beauty, thy fair eyes  
 On our soul's sacrifice.

“ Bright-winged Child  
 Who has another care when thou hast smiled ?  
 Unfortunates on earth, we see at last  
 All death-shadows, and glooms that overcast  
 Our spirits, fann'd away by thy light pinions.  
 O sweetest essence ! sweetest of all intonations !  
 God of warm pulses, and dishevell'd hair,  
 And panting bosoms bare !

Dear unseen light in darkness ! eclipser  
Of light in light ! delicious poisoner !  
Thy venom'd goblet will we quaff until  
We fill—we fill !  
And by thy Mother's lips——”

Was heard no more

For clamour, when the golden palace-door  
Open'd again, and from without, in shone  
A new magnificence. On oozy throne  
Smooth-moving came Oceanus the old,  
To take a latest glimpse at his sheepfold,  
Before he went into his quiet cave  
To muse for ever—Then, a lucid wave,  
Scoop'd from its trembling sisters of mid-sea,  
Afloat, and pillowing up the majesty  
Of Doris, and the Ægean seer, her spouse—  
Next, on a dolphin, clad in laurel boughs,  
Theban Amphion leaning on his lute :  
His fingers went across it—All were mute  
To gaze on Amphitrite, queen of pearls,  
And Thetis pearly too.—

The palace whirls

Around giddy Endymion ; seeing he  
Was there far strayed from mortality.  
He could not bear it—shut his eyes in vain ;  
Imagination gave a dizzier pain.  
“ O I shall die ! sweet Venus, be my stay !  
Where is my lovely mistress ? Well-away !

I die—I hear her voice—I feel my wing—”  
At Neptune’s feet he sank. A sudden ring  
Of Nereids were about him, in kind strife  
To usher back his spirit into life :  
But still he slept. At last they interwove  
Their cradling arms, and purposed to convey  
Towards a crystal bower far away.

Lo! while slow carried through the pitying  
crowd,  
To his inward senses these words spake aloud ;  
Written in star-light on the dark above :  
“ Dearest Endymion ! my entire love !  
How have I dwelt in fear of fate ; ’tis done—  
Immortal bliss for me too hast thou won.  
Arise then ! for the hen-dove shall not hatch  
Her ready eggs, before I’ll kissing snatch  
Thee into endless heaven. Awake ! awake ! ”

The youth at once arose : a placid lake  
Came quiet to his eyes ; and forest green,  
Cooler than all the wonder he had seen,  
Lull’d with its simple song his fluttering breast.  
How happy once again in grassy nest !



## ENDYMION.

### BOOK IV.

MUSE of my native land ! loftiest Muse !  
O first-born on the mountains ! By the hues  
Of heaven on the spiritual air begot :  
Long didst thou sit alone in northern grot,  
While yet our England was a wolfish den ;  
Before our forests heard the talk of men ;  
Before the first of Druids was a child ;—  
Long didst thou sit amid our regions wild,  
Rapt in a deep prophetic solitude.  
There came an eastern voice of solemn  
mood :—  
Yet wast thou patient. Then sang forth the  
Nine,  
Apollo's garland :—yet didst thou divine  
Such home-bred glory, that they cried in vain,  
' Come hither, Sister of the Island ! ' Plain  
Spake fair Ausonia ; and once more she spake  
A higher summons :—still didst thou betake  
Thee to thy native hopes. O thou hast won  
A full accomplishment ! The thing is done,

Which undone, these our latter days had risen  
On barren souls. Great Muse, thou know'st what  
prison

Of flesh and bone, curbs, and confines, and frets  
Our spirits' wings : despondency besets  
Our pillows ; and the fresh to-morrow morn  
Seems to give forth its light in very scorn  
Of our dull, uninspired, snail-paced lives.  
Long have I said, how happy he who shrives  
To thee ! But then I thought on poets gone,  
And could not pray :—nor can I now—so on  
I move to the end in lowliness of heart.—

“ Ah, woe is me ! that I should fondly part  
From my dear native land ! Ah, foolish maid !  
Glad was the hour, when, with thee, myriads  
bade

Adieu to Ganges and their pleasant fields !  
To one so friendless the clear freshet yields  
A bitter coolness ; the ripe grape is sour :  
Yet I would have, great gods ! but one short  
hour

Of native air—let me but die at home.”

Endymion to heaven's airy dome  
Was offering up a hecatomb of vows,  
When these words reach'd him. Whereupon he  
bows

His head through thorny-green entanglement  
Of underwood, and to the sound is bent,

Anxious as hind towards her hidden fawn.

"Is no one near to help me? No fair dawn  
Of life from charitable voice? No sweet saying  
To set my dull and sadden'd spirit playing?  
No hand to toy with mine? No lips so sweet  
That I may worship them? No eyelids meet  
To twinkle on my bosom? No one dies  
Before me, till from these enslaving eyes  
Redemption sparkles!—I am sad and lost."

Thou, Carian lord, hadst better have been tost  
Into a whirlpool. Vanish into air,  
Warm mountaineer! for canst thou only bear  
A woman's sigh alone and in distress?  
See not her charms! Is Phœbe passionless?  
Phœbe is fairer far—O gaze no more:—  
Yet if thou wilt behold all beauty's store,  
Behold her panting in the forest grass!  
Do not those curls of glossy jet surpass  
For tenderness the arms so idly lain  
Amongst them? Feelest not a kindred pain,  
To see such lovely eyes in swimming search  
After some warm delight, that seems to perch  
Dovelike in the dim cell lying beyond  
Their upper lids?—Hist!

"O for Hermes' wand,  
To touch this flower into human shape!  
That woodland Hyacinthus could escape

From his green prison, and here kneeling down  
Call me his queen, his second life's fair crown!  
Ah me, how I could love!—My soul doth melt  
For the unhappy youth—Love! I have felt  
So faint a kindness, such a meek surrender  
To what my own full thoughts had made too  
tender,

That but for tears my life had fled away!  
Ye deaf and senseless minutes of the day,  
And thou, old forest, hold ye this for true,  
There is no lightning, no authentic dew  
But in the eye of love: there's not a sound,  
Melodious howsoever, can confound  
The heavens and earth in one to such a death  
As doth the voice of love: there's not a breath  
Will mingle kindly with the meadow air,  
Till it has panted round, and stolen a share  
Of passion from the heart!"—

Upon a bough

He leant, wretched. He surely cannot now  
Thirst for another love: O impious,  
That he can even dream upon it thus!  
Thought he, "Why am I not as are the dead,  
Since to a woe like this I have been led  
Through the dark earth, and through the wondrous  
sea?

Goddess! I love thee not the less: from thee  
By Juno's smile I turn not—no, no, no—  
While the great waters are at ebb and flow,—

I have a triple soul ! O fond pretence—  
For both, for both my love is so immense,  
I feel my heart is cut in twain for them.”

And so he groan'd, as one by beauty slain  
The lady's heart beat quick, and he could see  
Her gentle bosom heave tumultuously.  
He sprang from his green covert : there she  
lay,

Sweet as a musk-rose upon new-made hay ;  
With all her limbs on tremble, and her eyes  
Shut softly up alive. To speak he tries :  
“ Fair damsel, pity me ! forgive that I  
Thus violate thy bower's sanctity !  
O pardon me, for I am full of grief—  
Grief born of thee, young angel ! fairest thief !  
Who stolen hast away the wings wherewith  
I was to top the heavens. . Dear maid, sith  
Thou art my executioner, and I feel  
Loving and hatred, misery and weal,  
Will in a few short hours be nothing to me,  
And all my story that much passion slew me ;  
Do smile upon the evening of my days ;  
And, for my tortured brain begins to craze,  
Be thou my nurse ; and let me understand  
How dying I shall kiss that lily hand.—  
Dost weep for me ! Then should I be content.  
Scowl on, ye fates ! until the firmament  
Outblackens Erebus, and the full-cavern'd earth  
Crumbles into itself. By the cloud-girth

Of Jove, those tears have given me a thirst  
To meet oblivion."—As her heart would burst  
The maiden sobb'd awhile, and then replied :

" Why must such desolation betide  
As that thou speakest of? Are not these green  
                  nooks

Empty of all misfortune? Do the brooks  
Utter a gorgon voice? Does yonder thrush,  
Schooling its half-fledged little ones to brush  
About the dewy forest, whisper tales?—  
Speak not of grief, young stranger, or cold snails  
Will slime the rose to-night. Though if thou  
                  wilt,

Methinks 'twould be a guilt—a very guilt—  
Not to companion thee, and sigh away  
The light—the dusk—the dark—till break of  
                  day!"

" Dear lady," said Endymion, "'tis past:  
I love thee! and my days can never last.  
That I may pass in patience still speak:  
Let me have music dying, and I seek  
No more delight—I bid adieu to all.  
Didst thou not after other climates call,  
And murmur about Indian streams?"—Then  
                  she,

Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree,  
For pity sang this roundelay——

" O Sorrow!  
                  Why dost borrow

The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?—  
    To give maiden blushes  
    To the white rose bushes?  
Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

“O Sorrow!  
    Why dost borrow  
The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—  
    To give the glowworm light?  
    Or, on a moonless night,  
To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?

“O Sorrow!  
    Why dost borrow  
The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?—  
    To give at evening pale  
    Unto the nightingale,  
That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?

“O Sorrow!  
    Why dost borrow  
Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?  
    A lover would not tread  
    A cowslip on the head,  
Though he should dance from eve till peep of  
    day—  
    Nor any drooping flower  
    Held sacred for thy bower,  
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

“To Sorrow,  
I bade good morrow,  
And thought to leave her far away behind;  
But cheerly, cheerly,  
She loyes me dearly;  
She is so constant to me, and so kind;  
I would deceive her,  
And so leave her,  
But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

“Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,  
I sat a weeping: in the whole world wide  
There was no one to ask me why I wept—  
And so I kept  
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears  
Cold as my fears.

“Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,  
I sat a weeping: what enamour'd bride,  
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,  
But hides and shrouds  
Beneath dark palm-trees by a river side?

“And as I sat, over the light blue hills  
There came a noise of revellers: the rills  
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—  
’Twas Bacchus and his crew!  
The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills  
From kissing cymbals made a merry din—  
’Twas Bacchus and his kin!



Like to a moving vintage down they came,  
 Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all on flame ;  
 All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,  
     To scare thee, Melancholy !  
 O then, O then, thou wast a simple name !  
 And I forgot thee, as the berried holly  
 By shepherds is forgotten, when in June,  
 Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and moon :—  
     I rush'd into the folly !

“ Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,  
 Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,  
     With sidelong laughing ;  
 And little rills of crimson wine imbrued  
 His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough  
     white  
     For Venus' pearly bite ;  
 And near him rode Silenus on his ass,  
 Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
     Tipsily quaffing.

“ Whence came ye, merry Damsels ! whence  
     came ye,  
 So many, and so many, and such glee ?  
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate,  
     Your lutes, and gentler fate ?  
 ‘ We follow Bacchus ! Bacchus on the wing,  
     A conquering !  
 Bacchus, young Bacchus ! good or ill betide,  
 We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide :—

Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
To our wild minstrelsy !'

" Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs ! whence came  
ye,

So many, and so many, and such glee ?

Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left  
Your nuts in oak-tree cleft ?—

For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree ;

For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,  
And cold mushrooms ;

For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth ;  
Great god of breathless cups and clirping  
mirth !

Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
To our mad minstrelsy !'

" Over wide streams and mountains great we  
went,

And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,

Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,

With Asian elephants :

Onward these myriads—with song and dance,

With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians' prance,

Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,

Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,

Plump infant laughs mimicking the coil

Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers' toil :

With toying oars and silken sails they glide,

Nor care for wind and tide.

“ Mounted on panthers’ furs and lions’ manes,  
From rear to van they scour about the plains ;  
A three days’ journey in a moment done ;  
And always, at the rising of the sun,  
About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,  
On spleenful unicorn.

“ I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown  
Before the vine-wreath crown !  
I saw parch’d Abyssinia rouse and sing  
To the silver cymbals’ ring !  
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
Old Tartary the fierce !  
The kings of Ind their jewel-sceptres vail,  
And from their treasures scatter pearly hail ;  
Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans.  
And all his priesthood moans,  
Before young Bacchus’ eye-wink turning pale.  
Into these regions came I, following him,  
Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim  
To stray away into these forests drear,  
Alone, without a peer :  
And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

“ Young Stranger !  
I’ve been a ranger  
In search of pleasure throughout every clime ; —  
Alas ! ’tis not for me :  
Bewitch’d I sure must be,  
To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

“Come then, Sorrow,  
Sweetest Sorrow!  
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast :  
I thought to leave thee,  
And deceive thee,  
But now of all the world I love thee best.

“There is not one,  
No, no, not one  
But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid ;  
Thou art her mother,  
And her brother,  
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.”

O what a sigh she gave in finishing,  
And look, quite dead to every worldly thing !  
Endymion could not speak, but gazed on her :  
And listen'd to the wind that now did stir  
About the crisped oaks full drearily,  
Yet with as sweet a softness as might be  
Remember'd from its velvet summer song.  
At last he said : “ Poor lady ! how thus long  
Have I been able to endure that voice ?  
Fair Melody ! kind Syren ! I've no choice ;  
I must be thy sad servant evermore :  
I cannot choose but kneel here and adore.  
Alas, I must not think—by Phœbe, no !  
Let me not think, soft Angel ! shall it be so ?  
Say, beautifullest, shall I never think ?  
O thou couldst foster me beyond the brink

Of recollection! make my watchful care  
Close up its bloodshot eyes, nor see despair!  
Do gently murder half my soul, and I  
Shall feel the other half so utterly!—  
I'm giddy at that cheek so fair and smooth;  
O let it blush so ever: let it soothe  
My madness! let it mantle rosy-warm  
With the tinge of love, panting in safe alarm.  
This cannot be thy hand, and yet it is;  
And this is sure thine other softling—this  
Thine own fair bosom, and I am so near!  
Wilt fall asleep? O let me sip that tear!  
And whisper one sweet word that I may  
know

This is this world—sweet dewy blossom!”—  
WOE!

WOE! WOE TO THAT ENDYMION! WHERE IS  
HE?—

Even these words went echoing dismally  
Through the wide forest—a most fearful tone,  
Like one repenting in his latest moan;  
And while it died away a shade pass'd by,  
As of a thunder-cloud. When arrows fly  
Through the thick branches, poor ring-doves  
sleek forth

Their timid necks and tremble; so these both  
Leant to each other trembling, and sat so  
Waiting for some destruction—when lo!  
Foot-feather'd Mercury appear'd sublime  
Beyond the tall tree tops; and in less time

Than shoots the slanted hail-storm, down he  
dropp'd

Towards the ground; but rested not, nor stopp'd  
One moment from his home: only the sword  
He with his wand light touch'd, and heaven-  
ward

Swifter than sight was gone—even before  
The teeming earth a sudden witness bore  
Of his swift magic. Diving swans appear  
Above the crystal circlings white and clear;  
And catch the cheated eye in wild surprise,  
How they can dive in sight and unseen rise—  
So from the turf outsprang two steeds jet-black,  
Each with large dark blue wings upon his back.  
The youth of Caria placed the lovely dame  
On one, and felt himself in spleen to tame  
The other's fierceness. Through the air they flew,  
High as the eagles. Like two drops of dew  
Exhaled to Phœbus' lips, away they are gone,  
Far from the earth away—unseen, alone,  
Among cool clouds and winds, but that the free  
The buoyant life of song can floating be  
Above their heads, and follow them untired.  
Muse of my native land! am I inspired?  
This is the giddy air, and I must spread  
Wide pinions to keep here; nor do I dread  
Or height, or depth, or width, or any chance  
Precipitous: I have beneath my glance  
Those towering horses and their mournful freight  
Could I thus sail, and see, and thus await

Fearless for power of thought, without thine aid ?  
There is a sleepy dusk, an odorous shade  
From some approaching wonder, and behold  
Those winged steeds, with snorting nostrils bold  
Snuff at its faint extreme, and seem to tire,  
Dying to embers from their native fire !

There curl'd a purple mist around them ;  
soon,

It seem'd as when around the pale new moon  
Sad Zephyr droops the clouds like weeping wil-  
low :

'Twas Sleep slow journeying with head on pillow  
For the first time, since he came nigh dead born  
From the old womb of night, his cave forlorn  
Had he left more forlorn ; for the first time,  
He felt aloof the day and morning's prime—  
Because into his depth Cimmerian  
There came a dream, showing how a young  
man,

Ere a lean bat could plump its wintry skin,  
Would at high Jove's empyreal footstool win  
An immortality, and how espouse  
Jove's daughter, and be reckon'd of his house.  
Now was he slumbering towards heaven's gate,  
That he might at the threshold one hour wait  
To hear the marriage melodies, and then  
Sink downward to his dusky cave again :  
His litter of smooth semiluculent mist,  
Diversely tinged with rose and amethyst,

Puzzled those eyes that for the centre sought ;  
 And scarcely for one moment could be caught  
 His sluggish form reposing motionless.  
 Those two on winged steeds, with all the stress  
 Of vision search'd for him, as one would look  
 Athwart the sallows of a river nook  
 To catch a glance at silver-throated eels,—  
 Or from old Skiddaw's top, when fog conceals  
 His rugged forehead in a mantle pale,  
 With an eye-guess towards some pleasant vale,  
 Descry a favourite hamlet faint and far.

These raven horses, though they foster'd are  
 Of earth's splenetic fire, dully drop [stop ;  
 Their full-vein'd ears, nostrils blood wide, and  
 Upon the spiritless mist have they outspread  
 Their ample feathers, are in slumber dead,—  
 And on those pinions, level in mid-air,  
 Endymion sleepeth and the lady fair.  
 Slowly they sail, slowly as icy isle  
 Upon a calm sea drifting : and meanwhile  
 The mournful wanderer dreams. Behold ! he  
 walks

On heaven's pavement, brotherly he talks  
 To divine powers : from his hand full fain  
 Juno's proud birds are pecking pearly grain :  
 He tries the nerve of Phœbus' golden bow,  
 And asketh where the golden apples grow :  
 Upon his arm he braces Pallas' shield,  
 And strives in vain to unsettle and wield



A Jovian thunderbolt : arch Hebe brings  
A full-brimm'd goblet, dances lightly, sings  
And tantalizes long ; at last he drinks,  
And lost in pleasure, at her feet he sinks,  
Touching with dazzled lips her starlight hand,  
He blows a bugle,—an ethereal band  
Are visible above : the Seasons four,—  
Green-kirtled Spring, flush Summer, golden store  
In Autumn's sickle, Winter frosty hoar,  
Join dance with shadowy Hours ; while still the  
blast,

In swells unmitigated, still doth last  
To sway their floating morris. " Whose is this ?  
Whose bugle ? " he inquires : they smile—" O  
Dis !

Why is this mortal here ? Dost thou not know  
Its mistress' lips ? Not thou ?—" 'Tis Dian's : lo !  
She rises crescented ! " He looks, 'tis she,  
His very goddess : good-bye earth, and sea,  
And air, and pains, and care, and suffering ;  
Good-bye to all but love ! Then doth he spring  
Towards her, and awakes—and, strange, o'er-  
head,

Of those same fragrant exhalations bred,  
Beheld awake his very dream : the gods  
Stood smiling ; merry Hebe laughs and nods ;  
And Phœbe bends towards him crescented.  
O state perplexing ! On the pinion bed,  
Too well awake, he feels the panting side  
Of his delicious lady. He who died

For soaring too audacious in the sun,  
 Where that same treacherous wax began to run,  
 Felt not more tongue-tied than Endymion.  
 His heart leapt up as to its rightful throne,  
 To that fair-shadow'd passion pulsed its way—  
 Ah, what perplexity! Ah, well a-day!  
 So fond, so beauteous was his bed-fellow,  
 He could not help but kiss her: then he grew  
 Awhile forgetful of all beauty save  
 Young Phœbe's, golden-hair'd; and so 'gan crave  
 Forgiveness: yet he turn'd once more to look  
 At the sweet sleeper,—all his soul was shook,—  
 She press'd his hand in slumber; so once more  
 He could not help but kiss her and adore.  
 At this the shadow wept, melting away.  
 The Latmian started up: "Bright goddess, stay!  
 Search my most hidden breast! By truth's own  
     tongue,  
 I have no diedale heart; why is it wrung  
 To desperation? Is there nought for me,  
 Upon the bourne of bliss, but misery?"

These words awoke the stranger of dark

*Hesperus.*

Her dawning love-look rapt Endymion blesses  
 With 'haviour soft. Sleep yawn'd from under  
     neath.

'Thou swan of Ganges, let us no more breathe  
 This murky phantasm! thou contented seem'st  
 P'illow'd in lovely idleness, nor dream'st

What horrors may discomfort thee and me.  
Ah, shouldst thou die from my heart-treachery !—  
Yet did she merely weep—her gentle soul  
Hath no revenge in it ; as it is whole  
In tenderness, would I were whole in love !  
Can I prize thee, fair maid, all price above,  
Even when I feel as true as innocence !  
I do, I do.—What is this soul then ? Whence  
Came it ? It does not seem my own, and I  
Have no self-passion or identity.  
Some fearful end must be ; where, where is it ?  
By Nemesis ! I see my spirit flit  
Alone about the dark—Forgive me, sweet !  
Shall we away ? ” He roused the steeds ; they  
beat  
Their wings chivalrous into the clear air,  
Leaving old Sleep within his vapoury lair.

The good-night blush of eve was waning slow,  
And Vesper, risen star, began to throe  
In the dusk heavens silvery, when they  
Thus sprang direct towards the Galaxy.  
Nor did speed hinder converse soft and  
strange—  
Eternal oaths and vows they interchange,  
In such wise, in such temper, so aloof  
Up in the winds, beneath a starry roof,  
So witless of their doom, that verily  
'Tis well nigh past man's search their hearts to  
see ;

Whether they wept, or laugh'd, or grieved, or  
toy'd—

Most like with joy gone mad, with sorrow cloy'd.

Full facing their swift flight, from ebony streak,  
The moon put forth a little diamond peak,  
No bigger than an unobserved star,  
Or tiny point of fairy scimeter;  
Bright signal that she only stoop'd to tie  
Her silver sandals, ere deliciously  
She bow'd into the heavens her timid head.  
Slowly she rose, as though she would have fled,  
While to his lady meek the Carian turn'd,  
To mark if her dark eyes had yet discern'd  
This beauty in its birth—Despair! despair!  
He saw her body fading gaunt and spare  
In the cold moonshine. Straight he seized her  
wrist;

It melted from his grasp; her hand he kiss'd;  
And, horror! kiss'd his own—he was alone.  
Her steed a little higher soar'd, and then  
Dropt hawk-wise to the earth.

There lies a den,  
Beyond the seeming confines of the space  
Made for the soul to wander in and trace  
Its own existence, of remotest glooms.  
Dark regions are around it, where the tombs  
Of buried griefs the spirit sees, but scarce  
One hour doth linger weeping, for the pierce

Of new-born woe it feels more inly smart :  
And in these regions many a venom'd dart  
At random flies ; they are the proper home  
Of every ill : the man is yet to come  
Who hath not journey'd in this native hell.  
But few have ever felt how calm and well  
Sleep may be had in that deep den of all.  
There anguish does not sting, nor pleasure pall ;  
Woe-hurricanes beat ever at the gate,  
Yet all is still within and desolate.  
Beset with painful gusts, within ye hear  
No sound so loud as when on curtain'd bier  
The death-watch tick is stifled. Enter none  
Who strive therefore ; on the sudden it is won.  
Just when the sufferer begins to burn,  
Then it is free to him ; and from an urn,  
Still fed by melting ice, he takes a draught—  
Young Semele such richness never quaff'd  
In her maternal longing. Happy gloom !  
Dark Paradise ! where pale becomes the bloom  
Of health by due ; where silence dreariest  
Is most articulate ; where hopes infest ;  
Where those eyes are the brightest far that keep  
Their lids shut longest in a dreamless sleep.  
O happy spirit-home ! O wondrous soul !  
Pregnant with such a den to save the whole  
In thine own depth. Hail, gentle Carian !  
For, never since thy griefs and woes began,  
Hast thou felt so content : a grievous feud  
Hath led thee to this Cave of Quietude.

Ay, his lull'd soul was there, although upborne  
With dangerous speed: and so he did not mourn  
Because he knew not whither he was going.  
So happy was he, not the aerial blowing  
Of trumpets at clear parley from the east  
Could rouse from that fine relish, that high feast.  
They stung the feather'd horse; with fierce  
alarm

He flapp'd towards the sound. Alas! no charm  
Could lift Endymion's head, or he had view'd  
A skyey mask, a pinion'd multitude,—  
And silvery was its passing: voices sweet  
Warbling the while as if to lull and greet  
The wanderer in his path. Thus warbled they,  
While past the vision went in bright array.

“Who, who from Dian's feast would be away?  
For all the golden bowers of the day  
Are empty left? Who, who away would be  
From Cynthia's wedding and festivity?  
Not Hesperus: lo! upon his silver wings  
He leans away for highest heaven and sings,  
Snapping his lucid fingers merrily!—  
Ah, Zephyrus! art here, and Flora too?  
Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,  
Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,  
Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill  
Your baskets high  
With fennel green, and balm, and golden pines,  
Savory latter-mint, and columbines,

Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny thyme ;

Yea, every flower and leaf of every clime,

All gather'd in the dewy morning : hie

Away ! fly, fly !—

Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,

Aquarius ! to whom king Jove has given

Two liquid pulse streams 'stead of feather'd wings,

Two fanlike fountains,—thine illuminings

For Dian play :

Dissolve the frozen purity of air ;

Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare

Show cold through watery pinions ; make more  
bright

The Star-Queen's crescent on her marriage night :

Haste, haste away !

Castor has tamed the planet Lion, see !

And of the Bear has Pollux mastery :

A third is in the race ! who is the third,

Speeding away swift as the eagle bird ?

The ramping Centaur !

The Lion's mane's on end : the Bear how fierce !

The Centaur's arrow ready seems to pierce

Some enemy : far forth his bow is bent

Into the blue of heaven. He'll be shent,

Pale unrelentor,

When he shall hear the wedding lutes a play-  
ing.—

Andromeda ! sweet woman ! why delaying

So timidly among the stars : come hither !

Join this bright throng, and nimbly follow whither

They all are going.

Danaë's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,  
Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud.  
Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral :  
Ye shall for ever live and love, for all

Thy tears are flowing.—

By Daphne's fright, behold Apollo !”—

More

Endymion heard not : down his steed him bore,  
Prone to the green head of a misty hill.

His first touch of the earth went nigh to kill.  
“Alas !” said he, “were I but always borne  
Through dangerous winds, had but my footsteps

WORN

A path in hell, for ever would I bless  
Horrors which nourish an uneasiness  
For my own sullen conquering ; to him  
Who lives beyond earth's boundary, grief is dim,  
Sorrow is but a shadow : now I see  
The grass ; I feel the solid ground—Ah, me !  
It is thy voice—divinest ! Where ?—who ? who  
Left thee so quiet on this bed of dew ?  
Behold upon this happy earth we are ;  
Let us aye love each other ; let us fare  
On forest-fruits, and never, never go  
Among the abodes of mortals here below,  
Or be by phantoms duped. O destiny !  
Into a labyrinth now my soul would fly,



But with thy beauty will I deaden it.  
Where didst thou melt to? By thee will I sit  
For ever: let our fate stop here—a kid  
I on this spot will offer: Pan will bid  
Us live in peace, in love and peace among  
His forest wildernesses. I have clung  
To nothing, loved a nothing, nothing seen  
Or felt but a great dream! Oh, I have been  
Presumptuous against love, against the sky,  
Against all elements, against the tie  
Of mortals each to each, against the blooms  
Of flowers, rush of rivers, and the tombs  
Of heroes gone! Against his proper glory  
Has my own soul conspired: so my story  
Will I to children utter, and repent.  
There never lived a mortal man, who bent  
His appetite beyond his natural sphere,  
But starved and died. My sweetest Indian, here,  
Here will I kneel, for thou redeemed hast  
My life from too thin breathing: gone and past  
Are cloudy phantasms. Caverns lone, farewell!  
And air of visions, and the monstrous swell  
Of visionary seas! No, never more  
Shall airy voices cheat me to the shore  
Of tangled wonder, breathless and aghast.  
Adieu, my daintiest Dream! although so vast  
My love is still for thee. The hour may come  
When we shall meet in pure elysium.  
On earth I may not love thee, and therefore  
Doves will I offer up, and sweetest store

All through the teeming year : so thou wilt shine  
On me, and on this damsel fair of mine,  
And bless our simple lives. My Indian bliss !  
My river-lily bud ! one human kiss !  
One sigh of real breath—one gentle squeeze,  
Warm as a dove's nest among summer trees,  
And warm with dew at ooze from living blood !  
Whither didst melt ? Ah, what of that !—all  
good

We'll talk about—no more of dreaming.—Now,  
Where shall our dwelling be ? Under the brow  
Of some steep mossy hill, where ivy dun  
Would hide us up, although spring leaves were  
none ;

And where dark yew-trees, as we rustle through,  
Will drop their scarlet-berry cups of dew !  
O thou would'st joy to live in such a place !  
Dusk for our loves, yet light enough to grace  
Those gentle limbs on mossy bed reclined :  
For by one step the blue sky shouldst thou find,  
And by another, in deep dell below,  
See, through the trees, a little river go  
All in its mid-day gold and glimmering.  
Honey from out the guarled hive I'll bring,  
And apples, wan with sweetness, gather thee,—  
Cresses that grow where no man may them see,  
And sorrel untorn by the dew-claw'd stag :  
Pipes will I fashion of the syrinx flag,  
That thou mayst always know whither I roam,  
When it shall please thee in our quiet home

To listen and think of love. Still let me speak ;  
Still let me dive into the joy I seek,—  
For yet the past doth prison me. The rill,  
Thou haply mayst delight in, will I fill  
With fairy fishes from the mountain tarn,  
And thou shalt feed them from the squirrel's  
barn.

Its bottom will I strew with amber shells,  
And pebbles blue from deep enchanted wells.  
Its sides I'll plant with dew-sweet eglantine,  
And honeysuckles full of clear bee-wine.  
I will entice this crystal rill to trace  
Love's silver name upon the meadow's face.  
I'll kneel to Vesta, for a flame of fire ;  
And to god Phœbus, for a golden lyre ;  
To Empress Dian, for a hunting-spear ;  
To Vesper, for a taper silver-clear,  
That I may see thy beauty through the night ;  
To Flora, and a nightingale shall light  
Tame on thy finger ; to the River-gods,  
And they shall bring thee taper fishing-rods  
Of gold, and lines of naiads' long bright tress.  
Heaven shield thee for thine utter loveliness !  
Thy mossy footstool shall the altar be  
'Fore which I'll bend, bending, dear love, to  
thee :

Those lips shall be my Delphos, and shall speak  
Laws to my footsteps, colour to my cheek,  
Trembling or steadfastness to this same voice,  
And of three sweetest pleasurings the choice :

And that affectionate light, those diamond things,  
Those eyes, those passions, those supreme pearl  
springs,  
Shall be my grief, or twinkle me to pleasure.  
Say, is not bliss within our perfect seizure?  
Oh that I could not doubt!"

The mountaineer

Thus strove by fancies vain and crude to clear  
His brier'd path to some tranquillity.  
It gave bright gladness to his lady's eye,  
And yet the tears she wept were tears of sorrow  
Answering thus, just as the golden morrow  
Peam'd upward from the valleys of the east:  
"O that the flutter of his heart had ceased,  
Or the sweet name of love had pass'd away!  
Young feather'd tyrant! by a swift decay  
Wilt thou devote this body to the earth:  
And I do think that at my very birth  
I lisp'd thy blooming titles inwardly;  
For at the first, first dawn and thought of thee,  
With uplift hands I bless'd the stars of heaven.  
Art thou not cruel? ever have I striven  
To think thee kind, but ah, it will not do!  
When yet a child, I heard that kisses drew  
Favour from thee, and so I kisses gave  
To the void air, bidding them find out love:  
But when I came to feel how far above  
All fancy, pride, and fickle maidenhood,  
All earthly pleasure, all imagined good,

Was the warm tremble of a devout kiss,—  
Even then that moment, at the thought of this,  
Fainting I fell into a bed of flowers,  
And languish'd there three days. Ye milder  
powers,  
Am I not cruelly wrong'd? Believe, believe  
Me, dear Endymion, were I to weave  
With my own fancies garlands of sweet life,  
Thou should'st be one of all. Ah, bitter strife!  
I may not be thy love: I am forbidden—  
Indeed I am—thwarted, affrighted, chidden,  
By things I trembled at, and gorgon wrath.  
Twice hast thou ask'd whither I went: hence  
forth

Ask me no more! I may not utter it,  
Nor may I be thy love. We might commit  
Ourselves at once to vengeance: we might die;  
We might embrace and die: voluptuous  
thought!

Enlarge not to my hunger, or I'm caught  
In trammels of perverse deliciousness.  
No, no, that shall not be: thee will I bless,  
And bid a long adieu."

#### The Carian

No word return'd: both lovelorn, silent, wan,  
Into the valleys green together went.  
Far wandering, they were perforce content  
To sit beneath a fair lone beechen tree;  
Nor at each other gazed, but heavily

Pored on its hazel cirque of shedded leaves.

Endymion! unhappy! it nigh grieves  
Me to behold thee thus in last extreme :  
Enskied ere this, but truly that I deem  
Truth the best music in a first-born song.  
Thy lute-voice'd brother will I sing ere long,  
And thou shalt aid—hast thou not aided me?  
Yes, moonlight Emperor! felicity  
Has been thy meed for many thousand years ;  
Yet often have I, on the brink of tears,  
Mourn'd as if yet thou wert a forester ;—  
Forgetting the old tale.

He did not stir

His eyes from the dead leaves, or one small  
pulse

Of joy he might have felt. The spirit culls  
Unfaded amaranth, when wild it strays  
Through the old garden-ground of boyish days.  
A little onward ran the very stream  
By which he took his first soft poppy dream ;  
And on the very bark 'gainst which he leant  
A crescent he had carved, and round it spent  
His skill in little stars. The teeming tree  
Had swell'n and green'd the pious character, y,  
But not ta'en out. Why, there was not a slope  
Up which he had not fear'd the antelope ;  
And not a tree, beneath whose rooty shade  
He had not with his tamed leopards play'd ;

Nor could an arrow light, or javelin,  
Fly in the air where his had never been—  
And yet he knew it not.

O treachery !

Why does his lady smile, pleasing her eye  
With all his sorrowing? He sees her not.  
But who so stares on him? His sister sure!  
Peona of the woods!—Can she endure?—  
Impossible—how dearly they embrace!  
His lady smiles; delight is in her face;  
It is no treachery.

“ Dear brother mine !

Endymion, weep not so! Why should'st thou  
pine

When all great Latmos so exalt will be?  
Thank the great gods, and look not bitterly;  
And speak not one pale word, and sigh no more.  
Sure I will not believe thou hast such store  
Of grief, to last thee to my kiss again.  
Thou surely canst not bear a mind in pain,  
Come hand in hand with one so beautiful.  
Be happy both of you! for I will pull  
The flowers of autumn for your coronals.  
Pan's holy priest for young Endymion calls;  
And when he is restored, thou, fairest dame,  
Shalt be our queen. Now, is it not a shame  
To see ye thus,—not very, very sad?  
Perhaps ye are too happy to be glad:

O feel as if it were a common day ;  
Free-voiced as one who never was away.  
No tongue shall ask, whence come ye? but ye  
shall

Be gods of your own rest imperial.  
Not even I, for one whole month will pry  
Into the hours that have pass'd us by,  
Since in my arbour I did sing to thee.  
O Hermes! on this very night will be  
A hymning up to Cynthia, queen of light ;  
For the soothsayers' old saw yesternight  
Good visions in the air,—whence will befall,  
As say these sages, health perpetual  
To shepherds and their flocks ; and furthermore,  
In Dian's face they read the gentle lore :  
Therefore for her these vesper-carols are.  
Our friends will all be there from nigh and far.  
Many upon thy death have ditties made ;  
And many, even now, their foreheads shade  
With cypress, on a day of sacrifice.  
New singing for our maids shalt thou devise,  
And pluck the sorrow from our huntsmen's  
brows,

Tell me, my lady-queen, how to espouse  
This wayward brother to his rightful joys!  
His eyes are on thee bent, as thou didst poise  
His late most goddess-like. Help me, I pray,  
To lure—Endymion, dear brother, say  
What ails thee?" He could bear no more, and so  
Bent his soul fiercely like a spiritual bow,



And twang'd it inwardly, and calmly said :  
" I would have thee my only friend, sweet maid !  
My only visitor ! not ignorant though,  
That those deceptions which for pleasure go  
'Mong men, are pleasures real as real may be :  
But there are higher ones I may not see,  
If impiously an earthly realm I take.  
Since I saw thee, I have been wide awake  
Night after night, and day by day, until  
Of the empyrean I have drunk my fill.  
Let it content thee, Sister, seeing me  
More happy than betides mortality.  
A hermit young, I'll live in mossy cave,  
Where thou alone shalt come to me, and lave  
Thy spirit in the wonders I shall tell.  
Through me the shepherd realm shall prosper  
    well ;  
For to thy tongue will I all health confide,  
And for my sake, let this young maid abide  
With thee as a dear sister. Thou alone,  
Peona, mayst return to me. I own  
This may sound strangely : but when, dearest  
    girl,  
Thou seest it for my happiness, no pearl  
Will trespass down those cheeks. Companion  
    fair !  
Wilt be content to dwell with her, to share  
This sister's love with me ? " Like one re-  
    sign'd  
And bent by circumstances, and thereby blind

In self-commitment, thus, that meek unknown :  
" Ay, but a buzzing by my ears has flown,  
Of jubilee to Dian :—truth I heard !  
Well then, I see there is no little bird,  
Tender soever, but is Jove's own care.  
Long have I sought for rest, and unaware,  
Behold I find it ! so exalted too !  
So after my own heart ! I knew, I knew  
There was a place untenanted in it ;  
In that same void white Chastity shall sit,  
And monitor me nightly to lone slumber.  
With sanest lips I vow me to the number  
Of Dian's sisterhood ; and kind lady,  
With thy good help, this very night shall see  
My future days to her fane consecrate."

As feels a dreamer what doth most create  
His own particular fright, so these three felt :  
Or like one who, in after ages, knelt  
To Lucifer or Baal, when he'd pine  
After a little sleep : or when in mine  
Far under-ground, a sleeper meets his friends  
Who know him not. Each diligently bends  
Towards common thoughts and things for very  
fear ;

Striving their ghastly malady to cheer,  
By thinking it a thing of yes and no,  
That housewives talk of. But the spirit-blow  
Was struck, and all were dreamers. At the last  
Endymion said : "Are not our fates all cast ?

Why stand we here? Adieu, ye tender pair!  
Adieu!" Whereat those maidens, with wild  
stare,

Walk'd dizzily away. Pained and hot  
His eyes went after them, until they got  
Near to a cypress grove, whose deadly maw,  
In one swift moment, would what then he saw  
Engulf for ever. "Stay," he cried, "ah, stay!  
Turn damsels! hist! one word I have to say:  
Sweet Indian, I would see thee once again.

It is a thing I dote on: so I'd fain,  
Peona, ye should hand in hand repair,  
Into those holy groves that silent are  
Behind great Dian's temple. I'll be yon,  
At Vesper's earliest twinkle—they are gone—  
But once, once, once again—" At this he prest  
His hands against his face, and then did rest  
His head upon a mossy hillock green  
And so remain'd as he a corpse had been  
All the long day; save when he scanty lifted  
His eyes abroad, to see how shadows shifted  
With the slow move of time,—sluggish and  
weary

Until the poplar tops, in journey dreary,  
Had reach'd the river's brim. Then up he  
rose,

And, slowly as that very river flows,  
Walk'd towards the temple-grove with this la-  
ment:

"Why such a golden eve? The breeze is sent

Careful and soft, that not a leaf may fall  
Before the serene father of them all  
Bows down his summer head below the west.  
Now am I of breath, speech, and speed possess'd  
But at the setting I must bid adieu  
To her for the last time. Night will strew  
On the damp grass myriads of lingering leaves,  
And with them shall I die ; nor much it grieves  
To die, when summer dies on the cold sward.  
Why, I have been a butterfly, a lord  
Of flowers, garlands, love-knots, silly posies,  
Groves, meadows, melodies, and arbour-roses ;  
My kingdom's at its death, and just it is  
That I should die with it : so in all this  
We miscall grief, bale, sorrow, heart-break, woe,  
What is there to plain of? By Titan's foe  
I am but rightly served." So saying, he  
Tripp'd lightly on, in sort of deathful glee ;  
Laughing at the clear stream and setting sun,  
As though they jests had been : nor had he done  
His laugh at nature's holy countenance,  
Until that grove appear'd, as if perchance,  
And then his tongue with sober seemlibed  
Gave utterance as he enter'd : " Ha ! " he said,  
" King of the butterflies ; but by this gloom,  
And by old Rhadamanthus' tongue of doom,  
This dusk religion, pomp of solitude,  
And the Promethean clay by thief endued,  
By old Saturnus' forelock, by his head  
Shook with eternal palsy, I did wed

Myself to things of light from infancy ;  
And thus to be cast out, thus lorn to die,  
Is sure enough to make a mortal man  
Grow impious." So he inwardly began  
On things for which no wording can be found ;  
Deeper and deeper sinking, until drown'd  
Beyond the reach of music : for the choir  
Of Cynthia he heard not, though rough brier  
Nor muffling thicket interposed to dull  
The Vesper hymn, far swollen, soft and full,  
Through the dark pillars of those sylvan aisles.  
He saw not the two maidens, nor their smiles,  
Wan as primroses gather'd at midnight  
By chilly-finger'd spring. Unhappy wight !  
"Endymion !" said Peona, "we are here !  
What wouldst thou ere we all are laid on bier ?"  
Then he embraced her, and his lady's hand  
Press'd, saying : " Sister, I would have command,  
If it were heaven's will, on our sad fate."  
At which that dark-eyed stranger stood elate  
And said, in a new voice, but sweet as love,  
To Endymion's amaze : " By Cupid's dove,  
And so thou shalt ! and by the lily truth  
Of my own breast thou shalt, beloved youth !"  
And as she spake, into her face there came  
Light, as reflected from a silver flame :  
Her long black hair swell'd ampler, in display  
Full golden ; in her eyes a brighter day  
Dawn'd blue, and full of love. Aye, he beheld  
Phœbe, his passion ! joyous she upheld

Her lucid bow, continuing thus: "Drear, drear  
Has our delaying been; but foolish fear  
Withheld me first; and then decrees of fate;  
And then 'twas fit that from this mortal state  
Thou shouldst, my love, by some unlook'd-for  
change

Be spiritualized. Peona, we shall range  
These forests, and to thee they safe shall be  
As was thy cradle; hither shalt thou flee  
To meet us many a time." Next Cynthia bright  
Peona kiss'd, and bless'd with fair good night:  
Her brother kiss'd her too, and knelt adown  
Before his goddess, in a blissful swoon,  
She gave her fair hands to him, and behold,  
Before three swiftest kisses he had told,  
They vanished far away!—Peona went  
Home through the gloomy wood in wonderment.

L A M I A .





## L A M I A .

### PART I.

UPON a time, before the faery broods  
Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous  
    woods,  
Before King Oberon's bright diadem,  
Sceptre, and mantle, clasp'd with dewy gem,  
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns  
From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslipp'd  
    lawns,  
The ever-smitten Hermes empty left  
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft :  
From high Olympus had he stolen light,  
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight  
Of his great summoner, and made retreat  
Into a forest on the shores of Crete.  
For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt  
A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt ;  
At whose white feet the languid Tritons pour'd  
Pearls, while on land they wither'd and adored.  
Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,  
And in those meads where sometimes she might  
    haunt,

Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,  
Though Fancy's casket were unlock'd to choose.  
Ah, what a world of love was at her feet!  
So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat  
Burn'd from his winged heels to either ear,  
That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,  
Blush'd into roses 'mid his golden hair,  
Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.  
From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,  
Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,  
And wound with many a river to its head,  
To find where this sweet nymph prepared her  
secret bed :

In vain ; the sweet nymph might nowhere be  
found,

And so he rested, on the lonely ground,  
Pensive, and full of painful jealousies  
Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.  
There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice,  
Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys  
All pain but pity : thus the lone voice spake :  
“ When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake !  
When move in a sweet body fit for life,  
And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife  
Of hearts and lips ! Ah, miserable me ! ”  
The God, dove-footed, glided silently  
Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,  
The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,  
Until he found a palpitating snake,  
Bright, and cirque-couchant in a dusky brake.

She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,  
 Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;  
 Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
 Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barr'd;  
 And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,  
 Dissolved, or brighter shone, or interwreathed  
 Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries—  
 So rainbow-sided, touch'd with miseries,  
 She seem'd at once, some penanced lady elf,  
 Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.  
 Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire  
 Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar:  
 Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!  
 She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls  
     complete:

And for her eyes—what could such eyes do there  
 But weep, and weep, that they were born so  
     fair?

As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.  
 Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake  
 Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's  
     sake,

And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,  
 Like a stoop'd falcon ere he takes his prey:

“Fair Hermes! crown'd with feathers, flutter-  
     ing light,

I had a splendid dream of thee last night:  
 I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold,  
 Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,

The only sad one ; for thou didst not hear  
The soft, lute-finger'd Muses chanting clear,  
Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,  
Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long melodious moan.

I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,  
Break amorous through the clouds, as morning  
breaks,

And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,  
Strike for the Cretan isle ; and here thou art !  
Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid ? ”

Whereat the star of Lethe not delay'd  
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired :  
“ Thou smooth-hipp'd serpent, surely high-inspired !

Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,  
Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise,  
Telling me only where my nymph is fled,—  
Where she doth breathe ! ” “ Bright planet, thou  
hast said,”

Return'd the snake, “ but seal with oaths, fair  
God ! ”

“ I swear,” said Hermes, “ by my serpent rod,  
And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown ! ”  
Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms  
blown.

Then thus again the brilliance feminine :  
“ Too frail of heart ! for this lost nymph of thine,  
Free as the air, invisibly, she strays  
About these thornless wilds ; her pleasant days

She tastes unseen ; unseen her nimble feet  
Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet :  
From weary tendrils, and bow'd branches green,  
She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen :  
And by my power is her beauty veil'd  
To keep it unaffronted, unassail'd  
By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,  
Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear'd Silenus' sighs.  
Pale grew her immortality, for woe  
Of all these lovers, and she grieved so  
I took compassion on her, bade her steep  
Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep  
Her loveliness invisible, yet free  
To wander as she loves, in liberty,  
Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone,  
If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon !"  
Then, once again, the charmed God began  
An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran  
Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.  
Ravish'd she lifted her Circean head,  
Blush'd a live damask, and swift-lisping said,  
" I was a woman, let me have once more  
A woman's shape, and charming as before.  
I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss !  
Give me my woman's form, and place me where  
he is.

Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,  
And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now."  
The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,  
She breathed upon his eyes, and swift was seen

Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the  
green.

It was no dream ; or say a dream it was,  
Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass  
Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.  
One warm, flush'd moment, hovering, it might  
seem

Dash'd by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he burn'd ;  
Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turn'd  
To the swoon'd serpent, and with languid arm.  
Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean charm.  
So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent  
Full of adoring tears and blandishment,  
And towards her stept : she, like a moon in  
wane,

Faded before him, cower'd, nor could restrain  
Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower  
That faints into itself at evening hour :  
But the God fostering her chilled hand,  
She felt the warmth, her eyelids open'd bland,  
And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,  
Bloom'd, and gave up her honey to the lees.  
Into the green-recessed woods they flew ;  
Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do.

Left to herself, the serpent now began  
To change ; her elfin blood in madness ran,  
Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, therewith  
besprent,  
Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent ;

Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish drear,  
Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,  
Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, without one  
cooling tear.

The colours all inflamed throughout her train,  
She writhed about, convulsed with scarlet pain :  
A deep volcanian yellow took the place  
Of all her milder-mooned body's grace ;  
And, as the lava ravishes the mead,  
Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede :  
Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and  
bars,

Eclipsed her crescents, and lick'd up her stars :  
So that, in moments few, she was undrest  
Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,  
And rubious-argent : of all these bereft,  
Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.  
Still shone her crown ; that vanish'd, also she  
Melted and disappear'd as suddenly ;  
And in the air, her new voice luting soft,  
Cried, " Lycius ! gentle Lycius ! "—borne aloft  
With the bright mists about the mountains  
hoar

These words dissolved : Crete's forests heard no  
more.

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,  
A full-born beauty new and exquisite ?  
She fled into that valley they pass o'er  
Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore ;

And rested at the foot of those wild hills,  
The rugged founts of the Pææan rills,  
And of that other ridge whose barren back  
Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,  
South-westward to Cleone. There she stood  
About a young bird's flutter from a wood,  
Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,  
By a clear pool, wherein she passioned  
To see herself escaped from so sore ills,  
While her robes haunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid  
More beautiful than ever twisted braid,  
Or sigh'd, or blush'd, or on spring-flower'd lea  
Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy :  
A virgin purest lipp'd, yet in the lore  
Of love deep learned to the red heart's core :  
Not one hour old, yet of sciential brain  
To unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain ;  
Define their pettish limits, and estrange  
Their points of contact, and swift counter-  
change ;

Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart  
Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art ;  
As though in Cupid's college she had spent  
Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,  
And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so fairly  
By the wayside to linger, we shall see .



But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse  
And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,  
Of all she list, strange or magnificent :  
How, ever, where she will'd, her spirit went ;  
Whether to faint Elysium, or where  
Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fain  
Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly stair ;  
Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,  
Stretch'd out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine ;  
Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine  
Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.  
And sometimes into cities she would send  
Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend ;  
And once, while among mortals dreaming thus,  
She saw the young Corinthian Lycius  
Charioting foremost in the envious race,  
Like a young Jove with calm uncager face,  
And fell into a swooning love of him.  
Now on the moth-time of that evening dim  
He would return that way, as well she knew,  
To Corinth from the shore ; for freshly blew  
The eastern soft wind, and his galley now  
Grated the quay-stones with her brazen prow  
In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle  
Fresh anchor'd ; whither he had been awhile  
To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there  
Waits with high marble doors for blood and in-  
cense rare.  
Jove heard his vows, and better'd his desire ;  
For by some freakful chance he made retire

From his companions, and set forth to walk,  
Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk :  
Over the solitary hills he fared,  
Thoughtless, at first, but ere eve's star appear'd  
His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,  
In the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades.  
Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near—  
Close to her passing, in indifference drear,  
His silent sandals swept the mossy green ;  
So neighbour'd to him, and yet so unseen  
She stood : he pass'd, shut up in mysteries,  
His mind wrapp'd like his mantle, while her eyes  
Follow'd his steps, and her neck regal white  
Turn'd—syllabling thus, "Ah, Lycius bright !  
And will you leave me on the hills alone ?  
Lycius look back ! and be some pity shown."  
He did ; not with cold wonder fearingly,  
But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice ;  
For so delicious were the words she sung,  
It seem'd he had loved them a whole summer  
long :

And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,  
Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,  
And still the cup was full,—while he, afraid  
Lest she should vanish ere his lips had paid  
Due adoration, thus began to adore ;  
Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so  
sure :

"Leave thee alone ! Look back ! Ah, Goddess, see  
Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee !

For pity do not this sad heart belie—  
Even as thou vanishest so I shall die.  
Stay ! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay !  
To thy far wishes will thy streams obey :  
Stay ! though the greenest woods be thy domain,  
Alone they can drink up the morning rain :  
Though a descended Pleiad, will not one  
Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune  
Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine ?  
So sweetly to these ravish'd ears of mine  
Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst  
fade,

Thy memory will waste me to a shade :—  
For pity do not melt ! ” — “ If I should stay,”  
Said Lamia, “ here, upon this floor of clay,  
And pain my steps upon these flowers too  
rough,

What canst thou say or do of charm enough  
To dull the nice remembrance of my home ?  
Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam  
Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,—  
Empty of immortality and bliss !  
Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know  
That finer spirits cannot breathe below  
In human climes, and live : Alas ! poor youth,  
What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe  
My essence ? What serener palaces,  
Where I may all my many senses please,  
And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts  
appease ;

It cannot be—Adieu!” So said, she rose  
Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to  
lose

The amorous promise of her lone complain,  
Swoon'd murmuring of love, and pale with pain.  
The cruel lady, without any show  
Of sorrow for her tender favourite's woe,  
But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,  
With brighter eyes and slow amenity,  
Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh  
The life she had so tangled in her mesh :  
And as he from one trance was wakening  
Into another, she began to sing,  
Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every thing,  
A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,  
While, like, held breath, the stars drew in their  
panting fires.

And then she whisper'd in such trembling tone,  
As those who, safe together met alone  
For the first time through many anguish'd days,  
Use other speech than looks ; bidding him raise  
His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt,  
For that she was a woman, and without  
Any more subtle fluid in her veins  
Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same  
pains

Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.  
And next she wonder'd how his eyes could miss  
Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,  
She dwelt but half retired, and there had led

Days happy as the gold coin could invent  
Without the aid of love ; yet in content  
Till she saw him, as once she pass'd him by,  
Where 'gainst a column he leant thoughtfully  
At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heap'd  
Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reap'd  
Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before  
The Adonian feast ; whereof she saw no more,  
But wept alone those days, for why should she  
adore ?

Lycius from death awoke into amaze,  
To see her still, and singing so sweet lays ;  
Then from amaze into delight he fell  
To hear her whisper woman's lore so well ;  
And every word she spake enticed him on  
To unperplex'd delight and pleasure known.  
Let the mad poets say whate'er they please  
Of the sweets of Fairies, Peris, Goddesses,  
There is not such a treat among them all,  
Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,  
As a real woman, lineal indeed  
From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed.  
Thus gentle Lamia judged, and judged aright,  
That Lycius could not love in half a fright,  
So threw the goddess off, and won his heart  
More pleasantly by playing woman's part,  
With no more awe than what her beauty gave,  
That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.  
Lycius to all made eloquent reply,  
Marrying to every word a twin-born sigh :

And last, pointing to Corinth, ask'd her sweet,  
If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.  
The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness  
Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease  
To a few paces; not at all surmised  
By blinded Lycius, so in her comprised  
They pass'd the city gates, he knew not how,  
So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all,  
Throughout her palaces imperial,  
And all her populous streets and temples lewd,  
Mutter'd, like tempest in the distance brew'd,  
To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.  
Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,  
Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,  
Companion'd or alone; while many a light  
Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,  
And threw their moving shadows on the walls,  
Or found them cluster'd in the corniced shade  
Of some arch'd temple door, or dusky colon-  
nade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,  
Her fingers he press'd hard, as one came near  
With curl'd gray beard, sharp eyes, and smooth  
bald crown,  
Slow-stepp'd, and robed in philosophic gown:  
Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,  
Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,

While hurried Lamia trembled: "Ah," said he,  
"Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?  
Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew?"—  
"I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me who  
Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind  
His features:—Lycius! wherefore did you blind  
Yourself from his quick eyes?" Lycius re-  
plied,  
"Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide  
And good instructor; but to-night he seems  
The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams."

While yet he spake they had arrived before  
A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal door,  
Where hung a silver lamp whose phosphor  
glow  
Reflected in the slabbed steps below,  
Mild as a star in water; for so new  
And so unsullied was the marble hue,  
So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,  
Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine  
Could e'er have touch'd there. Sounds Æolian  
Breathed from the hinges, as the ample span  
Of the wide doors disclosed a place unknown  
Some time to any, but those two alone,  
And a few Persian mutes, who that same year  
Were seen about the markets: none knew where  
They could inhabit; the most curious  
Were foil'd, who watch'd to trace them to their  
house:

And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,  
For truth's sake what woe afterwards befell,  
Twould humour many a heart to leave them  
thus,  
Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.



## L A M I A .

### PART II.

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,  
Is—Love, forgive us !—cinders, ashes, dust ;  
Love in a palace is perhaps at last  
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast :—  
That is a doubtful tale from faery land,  
Hard for the non-elect to understand.  
Had Lycius lived to hand his story down,  
He might have given the moral a fresh frown,  
Or clench'd it quite : but too short was their bliss  
To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft  
voice hiss.

Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,  
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,  
Hover'd and buzz'd his wings, with fearful roar,  
Above the lintel of their chamber door,  
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor.

For all this came a ruin : side by side  
They were enthroned, in the even tide,  
Upon a couch, near to a curtaining  
Whose airy texture, from a golden string

Floated into the room, and let appear  
Unveil'd the summer heaven, blue and clear.  
Betwixt two marble shafts :—there they reposed,  
Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,  
Saving a tithe which love still open kept,  
That they might see each other while they almost  
slept ;

When from the slope side of a suburb hill,  
Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill  
Of trumpets—Lycius started—the sounds fled,  
But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.  
For the first time, since first he harbour'd in  
That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,  
His spirit pass'd beyond its golden bourn  
Into the noisy world almost forsworn.  
The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,  
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want  
Of something more, more than her empery  
Of joys ; and she began to moan and sigh  
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well  
That but a moment's thought is passion's passing  
bell.

“ Why do you sigh, fair creature ? ” whisper'd he :  
“ Why, do you think ? ” return'd she tenderly :  
“ You have deserted me ; where am I now ?  
Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow :  
No, no, you have dismiss'd me ; and I go  
From your breast houseless : ay, it must be so.”  
He answer'd, bending to her open eyes,  
Where he was mirror'd small in paradise,—

“ My silver planet, both of eve and morn !  
Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,  
While I am striving how to fill my heart  
With deeper crimson, and a double smart ?  
How to entangle, trammel up and snare  
Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there,  
Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose ?  
Ay, a sweet kiss—you see your mighty woes.  
My thoughts ! shall I unveil them ? Listen then !  
What mortal hath a prize, that other men  
May be confounded and abash’d withal,  
But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestic,  
And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice  
Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth’s voice.  
Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,  
While through the thronged streets your bridal

CUT

Wheels round its dazzling spokes.”—The lady’s  
cheek

Trembled ; she nothing said, but, pale and meek,  
Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain  
Of sorrows at his words ; at last with pain  
Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,  
To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,  
Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim  
Her wild and timid nature to his aim ;  
Besides, for all his love, in self despite,  
Against his better self, he took delight  
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.  
His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue

Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible  
In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell  
Fine was the mitigated fury, like  
Apollo's presence when in act to strike  
The serpent—Ha! the serpent! certes, she  
Was none. She burnt, she loved the tyranny,  
And, all subdued, consented to the hour  
When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.  
Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,  
"Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by  
my truth,

I have not ask'd it, ever thinking thee  
Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,  
As still I do. Hast any mortal name,  
Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?  
Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth,  
To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?"  
"I have no friends," said Lamia, "no, not one;  
My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:  
My parents' bones are in their dusty urns  
Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,  
Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save me,  
And I neglect the holy rite for thee.  
Even as you list invite your many guests;  
But if, as now it seems, your vision rests  
With any pleasure on me, do not bid  
Old Apollonius—from him keep me hid."  
Lycius, perplex'd at words so blind and blank,  
Made close inquiry; from whose touch she  
shrank,

Feigning a sleep ; and he to the dull shade  
Of deep sleep in a moment was betray'd.

It was the custom then to bring away  
The bride from home at blushing shut of day,  
Veil'd, in a chariot, heralded along  
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage song,  
With other pageants : but this fair unknown  
Had not a friend. So being left alone,  
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin,)  
And knowing surely she could never win  
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,  
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress  
The misery in fit magnificence.  
She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and whence  
Came, and who were her subtle servitors.  
About the halls, and to and from the doors,  
There was a noise of wings, till in short space  
The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-arched  
grace.

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone  
Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan  
Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might  
fade.

Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade  
Of palm and plantain, met from either side,  
High in the midst, in honour of the bride :  
Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,  
From either side their stems branch'd one to

All down the aisled place ; and beneath all  
There ran a stream of lamps straight on from  
wall to wall.

So canopied, lay an untasted feast  
Teeming with odours. Lamia, regal drest,  
Silently paced about, and as she went,  
In pale contented sort of discontent,  
Mission'd her viewless servants to enrich  
The fretted splendour of each nook and niche  
Between the tree-stems marbled plain at first,  
Came jasper panels ; then, anon, there burst  
Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees,  
And with the larger wove in small intricacies.  
Approving all, she faded at self-will,  
And shut the chamber up, close, hush'd and still,  
Complete and ready for the revels rude,  
When dreadful guests would come to spoil her  
solitude.

The day appear'd, and all the gossip rout.  
O senseless Lycius ! Madman ! wherefore flout  
The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours,  
And show to common eyes these secret bowers ?  
The herd approach'd ; each guest, with busy brain,  
Arriving at the portal, gazed amain,  
And enter'd marvelling : for they knew the street,  
Remember'd it from childhood all complete  
Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen  
That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne ;  
So in they hurried all, mazed, curious and keen :

Save one, who look'd thereon with eye severe,  
 And with calm-planted steps walk'd in austere ;  
 'Twas Apollonius : something too he laugh'd,  
 As though some knotty problem, that had daft  
 His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,  
 And solve and melt :—'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule  
 His young disciple. " 'Tis no common rule,  
 Lycius," said he, " for uninvited guest  
 To force himself upon you, and infest  
 With an unbidden presence the bright throng  
 Of younger friends ; yet must I do this wrong,  
 And you forgive me." Lycius blush'd and led  
 The old man through the inner doors broad-  
                   spread ;

With reconciling words and courteous mien  
 Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,  
 Fill'd with pervading brilliance and perfume :  
 Before each lucid panel fuming stood  
 A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,  
 Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,  
 Whose slender feet wide-swerved upon the  
       .    soft

Wool-woofed carpets : fifty wreaths of smoke  
 From fifty censers their light voyage took  
 To the high roof, still mimick'd as they rose  
 Along the mirror'd walls by twin-clouds odorous.

Twelve sphered tables by silk seats insphered,  
High as the level of a man's breast rear'd  
On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold  
Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told  
Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine  
Came from the gloomy tun with merry shine.  
Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,  
Each shining in the midst the image of a God

When in an antechamber every guest  
Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure press'd,  
By ministering slaves, upon his hands and feet,  
And fragrant oils with ceremony meet  
Pour'd on his hair, they all moved to the feast  
In white robes, and themselves in order placed  
Around the silken couches, wondering  
Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth  
could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,  
While fluent Greek a vowel'd under-song  
Kept up among the guests, discoursing low  
At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;  
But when the happy vintage touch'd their  
brains,  
Louder they talk, and louder come the strains  
Of powerful instruments:—the gorgeous dyes,  
The space, the splendour of the draperies,  
The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,  
Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,



Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,  
 And every soul from human trammels freed,  
 No more so strange ; for merry wine, sweet wine,  
 Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.  
 Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height ;  
 Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright eyes double  
     bright :

Garlands of every green, and every scent  
 From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees branch-  
     rent,  
 In baskets of bright osier'd gold were brought  
 High as the handles heap'd, to suit the thought  
 Of every guest : that each, as he did please,  
 Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at his  
     ease.

What wreath for Lamia ? What for Lycius ?  
 What for the sage, old Apollonius ?  
 Upon her aching forehead be there hung  
 The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue ;  
 And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him  
 The thyrsus, that his watching eyes may swim  
 Into forgetfulness ; and, for the sage,  
 Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage  
 War on his temples. Do not all charms fly  
 At the mere touch of cold philosophy ?  
 There was an awful rainbow once in heaven :  
 We know her woof, her texture ; she is given  
 In the dull catalogue of common things.  
 Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,

Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,  
Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine—  
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made  
The tender-person'd Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,  
Scarce saw in all the room another face,  
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took  
Full brim'd, and opposite sent forth a look  
Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance  
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,  
And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher  
Had fix'd his eye, without a twinkle or a stir,  
Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,  
Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her  
sweet pride.

Lycius then press'd her hand, with devout touch,  
As pale it lay upon the rosy couch:  
'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins;  
Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains  
Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.

"Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost thou  
start?"

Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia answer'd  
not.

He gazed into her eyes, and not a jot  
Own'd they the lovelorn piteous appeal:  
More, more he gazed: his human senses reel:  
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs:  
There was no recognition in those orbs.

“Lamia!” he cried—and no soft-toned reply.  
The many heard, and the loud revelry  
Grew hush: the stately music no more breathes;  
The myrtle sicken’d in a thousand wreaths.  
By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased;  
A deadly silence step by step increased,  
Until it seem’d a horrid presence there,  
And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.  
“Lamia!” he shriek’d; and nothing but the  
                  shriek

With its sad echo did the silence break.  
“Begone, foul dream!” he cried, gazing again  
In the bride’s face, where now no azure vein  
Wander’d on fair-spaced temples; no soft bloom  
Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine  
The deep-recessed vision:—all was blight;  
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white.  
“Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless  
                  man!

Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban  
Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images  
Here represent their shadowy presences,  
May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn  
Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,  
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright  
Of conscience, for their long-offended might,  
For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries,  
Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.  
Corinthians! look upon that gray-beard wretch!  
Mark how, possess’d, his lashless eyelids stretch

Around his demon eyes ! Corinthians, see !  
 My sweet bride withers at their potency.”  
 “ Fool ! ” said the sophist, in an under-tone  
 Gruff with contempt ; which a death-nighing

HYCII

From Lycius answer'd, as heart-struck and lost,  
 He sank supine beside the aching ghost.  
 “ Fool ! Fool ! ” repeated he, while his eyes still  
 Relented not, nor moved ; “ from every ill  
 Of life have I preserved thee to this day,  
 And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey ? ”  
 Then Lamia breathed death-breath ; the sophist's

EYES

Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly,  
 Keen, cruel, perccant, stinging : she, as well  
 As her weak hand could any meaning tell,  
 Motion'd him to be silent ; vainly so,  
 He look'd and look'd again a level—No !  
 “ A serpent ! ” echoed he ; no sooner said,  
 Than with a frightful scream she vanished :  
 And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,  
 As were his limbs of life, from that same night.  
 On the high couch he lay !—his friends came  
 round—

Supported him—no pulse or breath they found,  
 And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body wound.\*

\* “ Philostratus, in his fourth book, *de Vita Apollonii*, hath a memorable instance in this kind, which I may not omit. of one Menippus Lycius, a young man twenty-five years of age, that, going betwixt Cenchreas and Corinth, met such a phan-

tasm in the habit of a fair gentlewoman, which, taking him by the hand, carried him home to her house, in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a Phœnician by birth, and if he would tarry with her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink such wine as never any drank, and no man should molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would die with him, that was fair and lovely to behold. The young man, a philosopher, otherwise staid and discreet, able to moderate his passions, though not this of love, tarried with her awhile to his great content, and at last married her, to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures, found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described by Homer, no substance, but mere illusions. When she saw herself descried, she wept, and desired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all that was in it, vanished in an instant; many thousands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the midst of Greece."—BURTON'S *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part 3, Sect. 2, Memb. I. Subs. I.



**ISABELLA,**  
**OR THE POT OF BASIL;**

**A STORY, FROM BOCCACCIO.**





# ISABELLA, OR THE POT OF BASIL;

A STORY, FROM BOCCACCIO.

## I.

FAIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!

They could not in the self-same mansion dwell

Without some stir of heart, some malady;

They could not sit at meals but feel how well

It soothed each to be the other by;

They could not, sure, beneath the same roof sleep,

But to each other dream, and nightly weep.

## II.

With every morn their love grew tenderer,

With every eve deeper and tenderer still;

He might not in house, field, or garden stir,

But her full shape would all his seeing fill;

And his continual voice was pleasanter

To her, than noise of trees or hidden rill;

Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,

She spoilt her half-done broidery with the same.

## III.

He knew whose gentle hand was at the latch,  
Before the door had given her to his eyes ;  
And from her chamber-window he would catch  
Her beauty farther than the falcon spies ;  
And constant as her vespers would he watch,  
Because her face was turn'd to the same skies ;  
And with sick longing all the night outwear,  
To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

## IV.

A whole long month of May in this sad plight  
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June :  
“ To-morrow will I bow to my delight,  
To-morrow will I ask my lady's boon.”—  
“ O may I never see another night,  
Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's tune.”—  
So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,  
Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;

## V.

Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek  
Fell sick within the rose's just domain,  
Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth seek  
By every lull to cool her infant's pain :  
“ How ill she is ! ” said he, “ I may not speak,  
And yet I will, and tell my love all plain :  
If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her tears,  
And at the least 'twill startle off her cares.”

## VI.

So said he one fair morning, and all day  
His heart beat awfully against his side;  
And to his heart he inwardly did pray  
For power to speak; but still the ruddy tide  
Stifled his voice, and pulsed resolve away—  
Fever'd his high conceit of such a bride,  
Yet brought him to the meekness of a child:  
Alas! when passion is both meek and wild!

## VII.

So once more he had waked and anguished  
A dreary night of love and misery,  
If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed  
To every symbol on his forehead high:  
She saw it waxing very pale and dead,  
And straight all flush'd; so, lisped tenderly,  
"Lorenzo!"—here she ceased her timid quest,  
But in her tone and look he read the rest.

## VIII.

"O Isabella! I can half perceive  
That I may speak my grief into thine ear;  
If thou didst ever any thing believe,  
Believe how I love thee, believe how near  
My soul is to its doom: I would not grieve  
Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not fear  
Thine eyes by gazing; but I cannot live  
Another night, and not my passion shrive.

## IX.

" Love ! thou art leading me from wintry cold,  
Lady ! thou ledest me to summer clime,  
And I must taste the blossoms that unfold  
In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time."  
So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,  
And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme :  
Great bliss was with them, and great happiness  
Grew, like a lusty flower in June's caress.

## X.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,  
Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
Only to meet again more close, and share  
The inward fragrance of each other's heart.  
She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
Sang of delicious love and honey'd dart ;  
He with light steps went up a western hill,  
And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd his fill.

## XI.

All close they met again, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
All close they met, all eves, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
Unknown of any, free from whispering tale,  
Ah ! better had it been for ever so,  
Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe.

## XII.

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot be—  
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,  
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,  
Too much of pity after they are dead,  
Too many doleful stories do we see,  
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read ;  
Except in such a page where 'Theseus' spouse  
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

## XIII.

But, for the general award of love,  
The little sweet doth kill much bitterness ;  
Though Dido silent is in under-grove,  
And Isabella's was a great distress,  
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian clove  
Was not embalm'd, this truth is not the less—  
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-bowers,  
Know there is richest juice in poison-flowers.

## XIV.

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,  
Enriched from ancestral merchandise,  
And for them many a weary hand did swelt  
In torched mines and noisy factories,  
And many once proud-quiver'd loins did melt  
In blood from stinging whip; with hollow eyes  
Many all day in dazzling river stood,  
To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.

## XV.

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,  
And went all naked to the hungry shark ;  
For them his ears gush'd blood ; for them in death  
The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark  
Lay full of darts ; for them alone did seethe  
A thousand men in troubles wide and dark :  
Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,  
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

## XVI.

Why were they proud ? Because their marble founts  
Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's tears ?  
Why were they proud ? Because fair orange-mounts  
Were of more soft ascent than lazar stairs ?  
Why were they proud ? Because red-lined accounts  
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years ?  
Why were they proud ? again we ask aloud,  
Why in the name of Glory were they proud ?

## XVII.

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired  
In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,  
As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,  
Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-spies ;  
The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired  
And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies—  
Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away,—  
Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

## XVIII.

How was it these same ledger-men could spy  
Fair Isabella in her downy nest?  
How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye  
A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's pest  
Into their vision covetous and sly!  
How could these money-bags see east and west?  
Yet so they did—and every dealer fair  
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

## XIX.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!  
Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,  
And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,  
And of thy roses amorous of the moon,  
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow  
Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's tune,  
For venturing syllables that ill beseem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

## XX.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale  
Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;  
There is no other crime, no mad assail  
To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:  
But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—  
To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet;  
To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,  
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

## XXI

These brethren having found by many signs  
What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she loved him too, each unconfin'd  
His bitter thoughts to other, well nigh mad  
That he, the servant of their trade designs,  
Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad  
When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees  
To some high noble and his olive-trees.

## XXII

And many a jealous conference had they,  
And many times they bit their lips alone,  
Before they fix'd upon a surest way  
To make the youngster for his crime atone ;  
And at the last, these men of cruel clay  
Cut mercy with a sharp knife to the bone ;  
For they resolved in some forest dim  
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

## XXIII

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant  
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade  
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent  
Their footing through the dews ; and to him said.  
“ You seem there in the quiet of content,  
Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade  
Calm speculation ; but if you are wise,  
Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.



## XXIV.

"To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we mount  
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine;  
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count  
His dewy rosary on the eglantine."  
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents' whine;  
And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

## XXV.

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,  
Each third step did he pause, and listen'd oft  
If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
Or the light whisper of her footstep soft;  
And as he thus over his passion hung,  
He heard a laugh full musical aloft;  
When, looking up, he saw her features bright  
Smile through an in-door lattice all delight.

## XXVI.

"Love, Isabel!" said he, "I was in pain  
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow:  
Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so fain  
I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow  
Of a poor three hours' absence? but we'll gain  
Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.  
Good bye! I'll soon be back."—"Good bye!" said  
she  
And as he went she chanted merrily.

## XXVII.

So the two brothers and their murder'd man  
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream  
Gurgles through straighten'd banks, and still doth fan  
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream  
Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan  
The brothers' faces in the ford did seem,  
Lorenzo's flush with love. They pass'd the water  
Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

## XXVIII.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love cease ;  
Ah ! when a soul doth thus its freedom win,  
It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace  
As the break-covert bloodhounds of such sin.  
They dipp'd their swords in the water, and did  
Their horses homeward, with convulsed spur, [tease  
Each richer by his being a murderer.

## XXIX.

They told their sister how, with sudden speed,  
Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,  
Because of some great urgency and need  
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.  
Poor girl ! put on thy stifling widow's weed,  
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed bands ;  
To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,  
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

## XXX.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be ;  
Sorely she wept until the night came on,  
And then, instead of love, O misery !  
She brooded o'er the luxury alone :  
His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,  
And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
And on her couch low murmuring, " Where ? O  
where ? "

## XXXI.

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long  
Its fiery vigil in her single breast ;  
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung  
Upon the time with feverish unrest—  
Not long ; for soon into her heart a throng  
Of higher occupants, a richer zest,  
Came tragic ; passion not to be subdued,  
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

## XXXII.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eves  
The breath of Winter comes from far away,  
And the sick west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay  
Of death among the bushes and the leaves,  
To make all bare before he dares to stray  
From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel  
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

## XXXIII.

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all pale,  
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes  
Could keep him off so long? They spake a tale  
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes  
Came on them, like a smoke from Hinnom's vale;  
And every night in dreams they groan'd aloud,  
To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

## XXXIV.

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,  
But for a thing more deadly dark than all;  
It came like a fierce potion, drunk by chance,  
Which saves a sick man from the feather'd pall  
For some few gasping moments; like a lance,  
Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall  
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again  
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and brain.

## XXXV.

It was a vision. In the drowsy gloom,  
The dull of midnight, at her couch's foot  
Lorenzo stood, and wept: the forest tomb  
Had marr'd his glossy hair which once could  
shoot  
Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom  
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute  
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed ears  
Had made a miry channel for his tears.

## XXXVI.

Strange sound it was, when the pale shadow spake ;  
For there was striving, in its piteous tongue,  
To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
And Isabella on its music hung :  
Languor there was in it, and tremulous shake,  
As in a palsied David's harp unstrung ;  
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-song,  
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars among.

## XXXVII.

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy bright  
With love, and kept all phantom fear aloof  
From the poor girl by magic of their light,  
The while it did unthread the horrid woof  
Of the late darken'd time—the murderous spite  
Of pride and avarice—the dark pine roof  
In the forest—and the sodden turfed dell,  
Where, without any word, from stabs he fell.

## XXXVIII.

Saying moreover, “ Isabel, my sweet !  
Red whortleberries droop above my head,  
And a large flint-stone weighs upon my feet ;  
Around me beeches and high chestnuts shed  
Their leaves and prickly nuts ; a sheepfold bleat  
Comes from beyond the river to my bed :  
Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,  
And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

## XXIX.

‘I am a shadow now, alas ! alas !

Upon the skirts of human nature dwelling  
Alone : I chant alone the holy mass,

While little sounds of life are round me knelling,  
And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,  
And many a chapel bell the hour is telling, [me,  
Paining me through : those sounds grow strange to  
And thou art distant in Humanity.

## XL.

‘I know what was, I feel full well what is,

And I should rage, if spirits could go mad ;  
Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss,

That paleness warms my grave, as though I had  
A seraph chosen from the bright abyss

To be my spouse : thy paleness makes me glad :  
Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel  
A greater love through all my essence steal.”

## XLI.

The Spirit mourn’d “Adieu !”—dissolved and left

The atom darkness in a slow turmoil ;  
As when of healthful midnight sleep bereft,  
Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless toil,  
We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,

And see the spangly gloom froth up and boil :  
It made sad Isabella’s eyelids ache,  
And in the dawn she started up awake ;

## XLII.

• Ha! ha!" said she, "I knew not this hard life,  
I thought the worst was simple misery ;  
I thought some Fate with pleasure or with strife  
Portion'd us—happy days, or else to die ;  
But there is crime—a brother's bloody knife !  
Sweet Spirit, thou hast school'd my infancy :  
I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,  
And greet thee morn and even in the skies."

## XLIII.

When the full morning came, she had devised  
How she might secret to the forest hie ;  
How she might find the clay, so dearly prized,  
And sing to it one latest lullaby ;  
How her short absence might be unsurmised,  
While she the inmost of the dream would try.  
Resolved, she took with her an aged nurse,  
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

## XLIV.

See, as they creep along the river side,  
How she doth whisper to that aged dame,  
And, after looking round the champaign wide,  
Shows her a knife.—"What feverous hectic flame  
Burns in thee, child?—what good can thee betide  
That thou shouldst smile again?"—The evening  
came,  
And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed ;  
The flint was there, the berries at his head.

## XLV.

Who hath not loiter'd in a green churchyard,  
And let his spirit, like a demon mole,  
Work through the clayey soil and gravel hard,  
To see skull, coffin'd bones, and funeral stole ;  
Pitying each form that hungry Death hath marr'd,  
And filling it once more with human soul ?  
Ah ! this is holiday to what was felt  
When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

## XLVI.

She gazed into the fresh-thrown mould, as though  
One glance did fully all its secrets tell ;  
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know  
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well ;  
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to grow,  
Like to a native lily of the dell :  
Then with her knife, all sudden she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

## XLVII.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies :  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,  
And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone  
Those dainties made to still an infant's cries :  
Then 'gan she work again : nor stay'd her care  
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.



## XLVIII.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,  
Until her heart felt pity to the core  
At sight of such a dismal labouring,  
And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,  
And put her lean hands to the horrid thing :  
Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore ;  
At last they felt the kernel of the grave,  
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

## XLIX.

Ah ! wherefore all this wormy circumstance ?  
Why linger at the yawning tomb so long ?  
O for the gentleness of old Romance,  
The simple plaining of a minstrel's song !  
Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,  
For here, in truth, it doth not well belong  
To speak :—O turn thee to the very tale,  
And taste the music of that vision pale.

## L.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword  
They cut away no formless monster's head,  
But one, whose gentleness did well accord [said,  
With death, as life. The ancient harps have  
Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord :  
If Love impersonate was ever dead,  
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd.  
'Twas love ; cold,—dead indeed, but not dethron'd.

## LI.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,  
And then the prize was all for Isabel :  
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb,  
And all around each eye's sepulchral cell  
Pointed each ringed lash ; the smeared loam  
With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,  
She drench'd away : and still she comb'd and kept  
Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd and wept.

## LII.

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews  
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,  
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze  
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—  
She wrapp'd it up ; and for its tomb did choose  
A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,  
And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet

## LIII.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,  
And she forgot the blue above the trees.  
And she forgot the dells where waters run,  
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze ;  
She had no knowledge when the day was done,  
And the new morn she saw not : but in peace  
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

## LIV.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,  
Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,  
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers  
Of Basil-tufts in Florence; for it drew  
Nurture besides, and life, from human fears, [view:  
From the fast mouldering head there shut from  
So that the jewel, safely casketed,  
Came forth, and in perfumed leaflets spread.

## LV.

O Melancholy, linger here awhile!  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!  
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,  
Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!  
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile;  
Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,  
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,  
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs.

## LVI.

Moan-hither, all ye syllables of woe,  
From the deep throat of sad Melpomene!  
Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,  
And touch the strings into a mystery;  
Sound mournfully upon the winds and low;  
For simple Isabel is soon to be  
Among the dead: She withers, like a palm  
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

## LVII.

O leave the palm to wither by itself;  
Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour!—  
It may not be—those Baillies of pelf,  
Her brethren, noted the continual shower  
From her dead eyes; and many a curious elf,  
Among her kindred, wonder'd that such dower  
Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside  
By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

## LVIII.

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd much  
Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,  
And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch; [mean:  
Greatly they wonder'd what the thing might  
They could not surely give belief, that such  
A very nothing would have power to wean  
Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,  
And even remembrance of her love's delay.

## LIX.

Therefore they watch'd a time when they might sit  
This hidden whim; and long they watch'd in vain.  
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,  
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain:  
And when she left, she hurried back, as swift  
As bird on wing to breast its eggs again:  
And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there  
Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

## LX.

Yet they contrived to steal the Basil-pot,  
And to examine it in secret place :  
The thing was vile with green and livid spot,  
And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face :  
The guerdon of their murder they had got,  
And so left Florence in a moment's space,  
Never to turn again.—Away they went,  
With blood upon their heads, to banishment.

## LXI.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away !  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !  
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,  
From isles Leilean, sigh to us—O sigh !  
Spirits of grief, sing not your “ Well-a-way ! ”  
For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die ;  
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,  
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

## LXII.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless things,  
Asking for her lost Basil amorously :  
And with melodious chuckle in the strings  
Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry  
After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,  
To ask him where her Basil was ; and why  
'Twas hid from her : “ For cruel 'tis,” said she,  
“ To steal my Basil-pot away from me.”

## LXIII.

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,  
    Imploring for her Basil to the last.  
No heart was there in Florence but did mourn  
    In pity of her love, so overcast.  
And a sad ditty of this story borne  
    From mouth to mouth through all the country  
    pass'd:  
Still is the burthen sung—"O cruelty,  
To steal my Basil-pot away from me!"

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES.





## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES.

### I.

ST. AGNES' EVE—Ah, bitter chill it was!  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen  
grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers while he  
told  
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven without a death,  
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer  
he saith.

### II.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;  
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his  
knees,  
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan.  
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:

The sculptured dead, on each side seem to  
freeze,  
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :  
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,  
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails  
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and  
mails.

## III.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden  
tongue  
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;  
But no—already had his death-bell rung ;  
The joys of all his life were said and sung :  
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve :  
Another way he went, and soon among  
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
And all night kept awake, for sinner's sake to  
grieve.

## IV.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ;  
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,  
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :  
The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :  
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise  
on their breasts.

## V.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
Numerous as shadows haunting fairly  
The brain, new-stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs  
    gay  
Of old romance. These let us wish away,  
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,  
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,  
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,  
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

## VI.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
And soft adornings from their loves receive  
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,  
If ceremonies due they did aright ;  
As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lily white ;  
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they  
    desire.

## VII.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline :  
The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard : her maiden eyes divine,  
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping  
    train

Pass by—she heeded not at all : in vain  
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,  
 And back retired ; not cool'd by high disdain,  
 But she saw not : her heart was elsewhere ;  
 She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the  
 year.

## VIII.

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,  
 Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and  
 short :  
 The hallow'd hour was near at hand : she sighs  
 Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort  
 Of whisperers in anger, or in sport ;  
 'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,  
 Hoodwink'd with fairy fancy ; all amorn,  
 Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,  
 And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

## IX.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
 She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,  
 Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire  
 For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
 Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and im-  
 plores  
 All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
 But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
 That he might gaze and worship all unseen ;  
 Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth  
 such things have been.

## X.

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper tell :  
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
Will storm his heart, Love's feverous citadel :  
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,  
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
Against his lineage : not one breast affords  
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

## XI.

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature came,  
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,  
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond  
The sound of merriment and chorus bland :  
He startled her ; but soon she knew his face,  
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,  
Saying, " Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee from this  
place ;  
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-  
thirsty race !

## XII.

" Get hence ! get hence ! there's dwarfish Hilde-  
brand ;  
He had a fever late, and in the fit  
He cursed thee and thine, both house and land :  
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit

More tamé for his gray hairs—Alas me ! flit !  
 Flit like a ghost away.”—“Ah, Gossip dear,  
 We’re safe enough ; here in this arm-chair sit,  
 And tell me how ”—“ Good Saints ! not here,  
 not here ;

Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy  
 bier.”

## XIII.

He follow’d through a lowly arched way,  
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume ;  
 And as she mutter’d “ Well-a—well-a-day ! ”  
 He found him in a little moonlight room,  
 Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
 “ Now tell me where is Madeline,” said he,  
 “ O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom  
 Which none but secret sisterhood may see,  
 When they St. Agnes’ wool are weaving piously.”

## XIV.

“ St. Agnes ! Ah ! it is St. Agnes’ Eve—  
 Yet men will murder upon holy days :  
 Thou must hold water in a witch’s sieve,  
 And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,  
 To venture so : it fills me with amaze  
 To see thee, Porphyro !—St. Agnes’ Eve !  
 God’s help ! my lady fair the conjurer plays  
 This very night : good angels her deceive !  
 But let me laugh awhile, I’ve mickle time to  
 grieve.”

## XV.

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,  
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
Who keepeth closed a wondrous riddle-book,  
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.  
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told  
His lady's purpose ; and he scarce could brook  
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments  
cold,  
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

## XVI.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,  
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart  
Made purple riot : then doth he propose  
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start :  
"A cruel man and impious thou art :  
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep and dream  
Alone with her good angels, far apart  
From wicked men like thee. Go, Go ! I deem  
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst  
seem."

## XVII.

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"  
Quoth Porphyro : "O may I ne'er find grace  
When my weak voice shall whisper its last  
prayer,  
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,

Or look with ruffian passion in her face ;  
Good Angela, believe me by these tears ;  
Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,  
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than  
wolves and bears."

## XVIII.

"Ah ! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul ?  
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, church-yard thing,  
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll ;  
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,  
Were never miss'd." Thus plaining, doth she  
bring  
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro :  
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
That Angela gives promise she will do  
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe

## XIX.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,  
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide  
Him in a closet, of such privacy  
That he might see her beauty unespied,  
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,  
While legion'd fairies paced the coverlet,  
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.  
Never on such a night have lovers met,  
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous  
debt.



## XX.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame :  
"All cates and dainties shall be stored there  
Quickly on this feast-night : by the tambour  
frame

Her own lute thou wilt see : no time to spare,  
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare  
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
Wait here, my child, with patience kneel in  
prayer

The while : Ah ! thou must needs the lady wed,  
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

## XXI.

So saying she hobbled off with busy fear.  
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd ;  
The Dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear  
To follow her ; with aged eyes aghast  
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,  
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain  
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd and chaste ;  
Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.  
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her  
brain.

## XXII.

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade,  
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,  
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware :

With silver taper's light, and pious care,  
 She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led  
 To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed ;  
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd  
 and fled.

## XXIII.

Out went the taper as she hurried in ;  
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died :  
 She closed the door, she panted, all akin  
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide :  
 No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide !  
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side ;  
 As though a tongueless nightingale should  
 swell  
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stilled in her  
 dell.

## XXIV.

A casement high and triple arch'd there was,  
 All garlanded with earven imageries  
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-  
 grass  
 And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings ;  
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
 A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens  
 and kings.

## XXV.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair  
    . breast,

As down she knelt for heaven's grace and  
    boon;

Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,

And on her silver cross soft amethyst,

And on her hair a glory, like a saint :

She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,

Save wings, for heaven : Porphyro grew faint :

She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal  
    taint.

## XXVI.

Anon his heart revives : her vespers done,

Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees ;

Uncasps her warmed jewels one by one ;

Loosens her fragrant bodice ; by degrees

Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees :

Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,

Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,

In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,

But dares not look behind, or all the charm is  
    fled.

## XXVII.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,

In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,

Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd

Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away ;

Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day ;  
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain ;  
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynim's  
    pray ;  
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud  
    again.

## XXVIII.

Stolen to this paradise, and so entranced,  
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced  
To wake into a slumberous tenderness ;  
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,  
And breathed himself : then from the closet  
    crept,  
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness  
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,  
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo !—how  
    fast she slept.

## XXIX.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon  
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon  
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet :—  
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet !  
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,  
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone :—  
The half-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

## XXX.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,  
While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and  
    gourd;  
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;  
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,  
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

## XXXI.

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing hand  
On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand  
In the retired quiet of the night,  
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—  
“And now, my love, my seraph fair awake!  
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:  
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,  
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth  
    ache.”

## XXXII.

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm  
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream  
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight  
    charm

Impossible to melt as iced stream:

The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam,  
 Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies :  
 It seem'd he never, never could redeem  
 From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes ;  
 So mused awhile, entail'd in wooed phantasies.

## XXXIII.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—  
 Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,  
 He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,  
 In Provence call'd " La belle dame sans  
 mercy : "  
 Close to her ear touching the melody ;—  
 Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan :  
 He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly  
 Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone :  
 Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured  
 stone.

## XXXIV.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
 Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep :  
 There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd  
 The blisses of her dream so pure and deep  
 At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
 And moan forth witless words with many a  
 sigh ;  
 While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep ;  
 Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,  
 Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dream-  
 ingly.

## XXXV.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now  
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;  
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:  
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and  
    drear!  
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!  
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where  
    to go."

## XXXVI.

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far  
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star  
Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;  
Into her dream he melted, as the rose  
Blendeth its odour with the violet,—  
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind  
    blows  
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet  
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon  
    bath set.

## XXXVII.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:  
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"  
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:  
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!"

Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—  
 Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?  
 I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
 Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—  
 A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing.”

## XXXVIII.

“My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!  
 Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?  
 Thy beauty’s shield, heart-shaped and vermeil  
     dyed?  
 Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
 After so many hours of toil and quest,  
 A famish’d pilgrim,—saved by miracle.  
 Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest  
 Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think’st well  
 To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.”

## XXXIX.

“Hark! ’tis an elfin storm from faery land,  
 Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:  
 Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—  
 The bloated wassailers will never heed:  
 Let us away, my love, with happy speed;  
 There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—  
 Drown’d all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:  
 Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,  
 For o’er the southern moors I have a home for  
     thee.”



## XL.

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around.  
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—  
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they  
found,  
In all the house was heard no human sound.  
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each  
door;  
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;  
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

## XLI.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall!  
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,  
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flagon by his side:  
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:  
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—  
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;  
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges  
groans.

## XLII.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago  
These lovers fled away into the storm.  
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form

Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old  
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;  
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

# HYPERION



## HYPERION.

### BOOK I.

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his lair ;  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.  
A stream went voiceless by, still deaden'd more  
By reason of his fallen divinity  
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,  
No further than to where his feet had stray'd,  
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground

His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
Unseptr'd ; and his realmless eyes were closed  
While his bow'd head seem'd listening to the  
Earth,  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his  
place ;  
But there came one, who with a kindred hand  
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low  
With reverence, though to one who knew it not  
She was a Goddess of the infant world ;  
By her in stature the tall Amazon  
Had stood a pigmy's height : she would have ta'en  
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;  
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.  
Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,  
Pedestall'd haply in a palace-court,  
When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.  
But oh ! how unlike marble was that face :  
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.  
There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun ;  
As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear  
Was with its stored thunder labouring up.  
One hand she press'd upon that aching spot  
Where beats the human heart, as if just there,  
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain :

The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his ear  
Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake  
In solemn tenour and deep organ tone :  
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue  
Would come in these like accents ; O how frail  
To that large utterance of the early Gods !  
" Saturn, look up !—though wherefore, po & old  
King ?

I have no comfort for thee, no not one :  
I cannot say, ' O wherefore sleepest thou ? '  
For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth  
Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God ;  
And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,  
Has from thy sceptre pass'd ; and all the air  
Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.  
Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,  
Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house ;  
And thy sharp lightning in unpractised hands  
Scorches and burns our once serene domain.  
O aching time ! O moments big as years !  
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,  
And press it so upon our weary griefs  
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
Saturn, sleep on :—O thoughtless, why did I  
Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude ?  
Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes ?  
Saturn, sleep on ! while at thy feet I weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,

Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave :  
So came these words and went ; the while in

*tenos*

She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,  
Just where her falling hair might be outspread  
A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.  
One moon, with alteration slow, had shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
And still these two were postured motionless,  
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern ;  
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,  
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up  
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,  
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,  
And that fair kneeling Goddess ; and then spake  
As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard  
Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :  
" O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,  
Then, I feel thee ere I see thy face ;  
Look up, and let me see our doom in it ;  
Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
Is Saturn's ; tell me, if thou hear'st the voice  
Of Saturn ; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,  
Naked and bare of its great diadem,



Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power  
 To make me desolate? whence came the strength?  
 How was it nurtured to such bursting forth,  
 While Fate seem'd strangled in my nervous  
     grasp?

But it is so; and I am smother'd up,  
 And buried from all godlike exercise  
 Of influence benign on planets pale,  
 Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
 Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,  
 And all those acts which Deity supreme  
 Doth ease its heart of love in. I am gone  
 Away from my own bosom: I have left  
 My strong identity, my real self,  
 Somewhere between the throne, and where I sit  
 Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea,  
     search!

Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round  
 Upon all space: space starr'd, and lorn of light:  
 Space region'd with life-air, and barren void;  
 Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.  
 Search, Thea, search! and tell me if thou seest  
 A certain shape or shadow, making way  
 With wings or chariot fierce to repossess  
 A heaven he lost erewhile: it must—it must  
 Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be king.  
 Yes, there must be a golden victory;  
 There must be Gods thrown down, and trumpets  
     blown  
 Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival

Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,  
Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir  
Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be  
Beautiful things made new, for the surprise  
Of the sky-children ; I will give command :  
Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ? ”

This passion lifted him upon his feet,  
And made his hands to struggle in the air,  
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with sweat,  
His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing deep ;  
A little time, and then again he snatch'd  
Utterance thus :—“ But cannot I create ?  
Cannot I form ? Cannot I fashion forth  
Another world, another universe,  
To overbear and crumble this to nought ?  
Where is another chaos ? Where ? ” That word  
Found way unto Olympus, and made quake  
The rebel three. Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voiced spake, yet full of awe.

“ This cheers our fallen house : come to our  
friends,

O Saturn ! come away, and give them heart ;  
I know the covert, for thence came I hither.”  
Thus brief ; then with beseeching eyes she went  
With backward footing through the shade a space :  
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the way

Through aged boughs, that yielded like the mist  
Which eagles cleave, upmounting from their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears were shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe :  
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,  
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.  
But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept  
His sovereignty, and rule, and majesty ;  
Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire  
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up  
From man to the sun's God, yet unsecure :  
For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shudder'd he,  
Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,  
Or the familiar visiting of one  
Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,  
Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp ;  
But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,  
Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright,  
Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,  
And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,  
Glared a blood-red through all its thousand  
courts,  
Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries ;  
And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds  
Flush'd angerly : while sometimes eagles' wings.  
Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,

Darken'd the place ; and neighing steeds were  
heard,

Not heard before by Gods or wondering men.

Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths  
Of incense, breathed aloft from sacred hills,

Instead of sweets, his ample palate took  
Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick :

And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy west,  
After the full completion of fair day,

For rest divine upon exalted couch,

And slumber in the arms of melody,

He paced away the pleasant hours of ease

With stride colossal, on from hall to hall ;

While far within each aisle and deep recess,

His winged minions in close clusters stood,

Amazed and full of fear ; like anxious men

Who on wide plains gather in panting troops,

When earthquakes jar their battlements and  
towers.

Even now, while Saturn, roused from icy trance,

Went step for step with Thea through the  
woods.

Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,

Came slope upon the threshold of the west ;

Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew ope

In smoothed silence, save what solemn tubes,

Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet

And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies ;

And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,

In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,

That inlet to severe magnificence  
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath ;  
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,  
And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,  
That scared away the meek ethereal Hours  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he  
    flared,  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,  
Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,  
And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades,  
Until he reach'd the great main cupola ;  
There standing fierce beneath, he stampt his foot,  
And from the basements deep to the high towers  
Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before  
'The quavering thunder thereupon had ceased,  
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,  
To this result : " O dreams of day and night !  
O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !  
O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !  
O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded pools !  
Why do I know ye ? why have I seen ye ? why  
Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
To see and to behold these horrors new ?  
Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?  
Am I to leave this haven of my rest,  
This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,  
This calm luxuriance of blissful light,  
These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,

Of all my lucent empire? It is left  
Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine.  
The blaze, the splendour, and the symmetry,  
I cannot see—but darkness, death and darkness.  
Even here, into my centre of repose,  
The shady visions come to domineer,  
Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp—  
Fall!—No, by Tellus and her briny robes!  
Over the fiery frontier of my realms  
I will advance a terrible right arm  
Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove,  
And bid old Saturn take his throne again.”  
He spake, and ceased, the while a heavier threat  
Held struggle with his throat, but came not forth;  
For as in theatres of crowded men  
Hubbub increases more they call out “Hush!”  
So at Hyperion’s words the Phantoms pale  
Bestir’d themselves, thrice horrible and cold,  
And from the mirror’d level where he stood  
A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.  
At this, through all his bulk an agony  
Crept gradual, from the feet unto the crown,  
Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular  
Making slow way, with head and neck convulsed  
From over-strained might. Released, he fled  
To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours  
Before the dawn in season due should blush,  
He breathed fierce breath against the sleepy  
portals,  
Clear’d them of heavy vapours, burst them wide

Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.  
The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode  
Each day from east to west the heavens through,  
Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds ;  
Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and hid,  
But ever and anon the glancing spheres,  
Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting colure,  
Glow'd through, and wrought upon the muffling  
dark

Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir deep  
Up to the zenith—hieroglyphics old,  
Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers  
Then living on the earth, with labouring thought  
Won from the gaze of many centuries :  
Now lost, save what we find on remnants huge  
Of stone, or marble swart ; their import gone,  
Their wisdom long since fled. Two wings this orb  
Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,  
Ever exalted at the God's approach :  
And now, from forth the gloom their plumes  
immense

Rose, one by one, till all outspreaded were ;  
While still the dazzling globe maintain'd eclipse,  
Awaiting for Hyperion's command.  
Fain would he have commanded, fain took throne  
And bid the day begin, if but for change.  
He might not :—No, though a primeval God :  
The sacred seasons might not be disturb'd.  
Therefore the operations of the dawn  
Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.

Those silver wings expanded sisterly,  
Eager to sail their orb ; the porches wide  
Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night ;  
And the bright Titan, frenzied with new woes,  
Unused to bend, by hard compulsion bent  
His spirit to the sorrow of the time ;  
And all along a dismal rack of clouds,  
Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance faint.  
There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars  
Look'd down on him with pity, and the voice  
Of Cœlus, from the universal space,  
(Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear :  
" O brightest of my children dear, earth-born  
And sky-engender'd, Son of Mysteries !  
All unrevealed even to the powers  
Which met at thy creating ! at whose joys  
And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,  
I, Cœlus, wonder how they came and whence ;  
And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,  
Distinct, and visible ; symbols divine,  
Manifestations of that beauteous life  
Diffused unseen throughout eternal space ;  
Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest  
child !  
Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses !  
There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion  
Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,  
I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne !  
To me his arms were spread, to me his voice



Found way from forth the thunders round his  
head !

Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face.

Art thou, too, near such doom? vague fear  
there is :

For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.

Divine ye were created, and divine

In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd,

Unruffled, like high Gods, ye lived and ruled :

Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath ;

Actions of rage and passion ; even as

I see them, on the mortal world beneath,

In men who die.—This is the grief, O Son !

Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall !

Yet do thou strive ; as thou art capable,

As thou canst move about, an evident God,

And canst oppose to each malignant hour

Ethereal presence :—I am but a voice ;

My life is but the life of winds and tides,—

No more than winds and tides can I avail :—

But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van

Of circumstance ; yea, seize the arrow's barb

Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth !

For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.

Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,

And of thy seasons be a careful nurse.”—

Ere half this region-whisper had come down

Hyperion arose, and on the stars

Lifted his curvèd lids, and kept them wide

Until it ceased ; and still he kept them wide :

And still they were the same bright, patient stars.  
Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,  
Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,  
And plunged all noiseless into the deep night.

## HYPERION.

### BOOK II.

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings  
Hyperion slid into the rustled air,  
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place  
Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.  
It was a den where no insulting light  
Could glimmer on their tears; where their own  
groans

They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar  
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,  
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.  
Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd  
Ever as if just rising from a sleep,  
Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns;  
And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.  
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,  
Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled

Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering,  
Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,  
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyryon,  
With many more, the brawniest in assault,  
Were pent in regions of laborious breath ;  
Dungeon'd in opaque element to keep  
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their  
limbs  
Locked up like veins of metal, cramped and  
screwed ;  
Without a motion, save of their big hearts  
Heaving in pain, and horribly convulsed  
With sanguine, feverous, boiling gurge of pulse.  
Mnemosyne was straying in the world ;  
Far from her moon had Phæbe wandered ;  
And many else were free to roam abroad,  
But for the main, here found they covert drear.  
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
Lay vast and edgeways ; like a dismal cirque  
Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,  
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
In dull November, and their chancel vault,  
The heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.  
Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave  
Or word, or look, or action of despair.  
Creüs was one ; his ponderous iron mace  
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.  
Iapetus another ; in his grasp,  
A serpent's plashy neck ; its barbed tongue

Squeezed from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd  
length

Dead ; and because the creature could not spit  
Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.

Next Cottus : prone he lay, chin uppermost,

As though in pain : for still upon the flint

He ground severe his skull, with open mouth

And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him

Asia, born of most enormous Caf,

Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,

Though feminine, than any of her sons :

More thought than woe was in her dusky face,

For she was prophesying of her glory ;

And in her wide imagination stood

Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes,

By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.

Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,

So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk

Shed from the broadest of her elephants.

Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelfe,

Upon his elbow raised, all prostrate else,

Shadow'd Enceladus ; once tame and mild

As grazing ox unworried in the meads ;

Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,

He meditated, plotted, and even now

Was hurling mountains in that second war,

Not long delay'd, that scared the younger Gods

To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.

Not far hence Atlas ; and beside him prone

Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close

Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap  
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.  
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight ;  
No shape distinguishable, more than when  
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the  
clouds :

And many else whose names may not be told.  
For when the muse's wings are air-ward spread,  
Who shall delay her flight? And she must chant  
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had climbed  
With damp and slippery footing from a depth  
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff  
Their heads appear'd, and up their stature grew  
Till on the level height their steps found ease :  
Then Thea spread abroad her trembling arms  
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain,  
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's face :  
There saw she direst strife ; the supreme God  
At war with all the frailty of grief,  
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,  
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair.  
Against these plagues he strove in vain : for Fate  
Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,  
A disanointing poison : so that Thea,  
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him pass  
First onwards in, among the fallen tribe.

As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,

When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise ;  
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,  
Felt faint, and would have sunk among the rest,  
But that he met Enceladus's eye,  
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at once  
Came like an inspiration ; and he shouted,  
" Titans, behold your God !" at which some  
groan'd ;

Some started on their feet ; some also shouted ;  
Some wept, some wail'd—all bow'd with rever-  
ence ;

And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,  
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her forehead wan,  
Her eyebrows thin and jet, and hollow eyes.  
There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines  
When Winter lifts his voice ; there is a noise  
Among immortals when a God gives sign,  
With hushing finger, how he means to load  
His tongue with the full weight of utterless  
thought,

With thunder, and with music, and with pomp :  
Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ;  
Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world.  
No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,  
Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom  
Grew up like organ, that begins anew  
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,  
Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.  
Thus grew it up :—" Not in my own sad breast,

Which is its own great judge and searcher out,  
 Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
 Not in the legends of the first of days,  
 Studied from that old spirit-leaved book  
 Which starry Uranus with finger bright  
 Saved from the shores of darkness, when the

## WAVES

Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom ;  
 And the which book ye know I ever kept  
 For my firm-based footstool :—Ah, infirm !  
 Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent  
 Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,—  
 At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling  
 One against one, or two, or three, or all,  
 Each several one against the other three,  
 As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods  
 Drown both, and press them both against earth's  
 face,

Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath  
 Unhinges the poor world ;—not in that strife,  
 Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,  
 Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
 No, nowhere can unriddle, though I search,  
 And pore on Nature's universal scroll  
 Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,  
 The first-born of all shaped and palpable Gods,  
 Should cower beneath what, in comparison,  
 Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,  
 O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd, ye are  
 here !



O Titans, shall I say 'Arise!'—Ye groan :  
 Shall I say 'Crouch!'—Ye groan. What can I  
 then?

O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear !  
 What can I ? Tell me, all ye brethren Gods,  
 How we can war, how engine our great wrath !  
 O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear  
 Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,  
 Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face  
 I see, astom'd, that severe content  
 Which comes of thought and musing : give us  
 help !"

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,  
 Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
 But cogitation in his watery shades,  
 Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,  
 In murmurs, which his first endeavouring tongue  
 Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands.  
 "O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-  
 stung,

Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !  
 Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,  
 My voice is not a bellows unto ire.  
 Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof  
 How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop :  
 And in the proof much comfort will I give,  
 If ye will take that comfort in its truth.  
 We fall by course of Nature's law, not force  
 Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou

Hast sifted well the atom-universe ;  
But for this reason, that thou art the King,  
And only blind from sheer supremacy,  
One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,  
Through which I wander'd to eternal truth.  
And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,  
So art thou not the last ; it cannot be.  
Thou art not the beginning nor the end.  
From chaos and parental darkness came  
Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,  
That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends  
Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,  
And with it light, and light engendering  
Upon its own producer, forthwith touch'd  
The whole enormous matter into life.  
Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest :  
Then thou first-born, and we the giant-race,  
Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.  
Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain ;  
O folly ! for to bear all naked truths,  
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,  
That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well !  
As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far  
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once  
chiefs ;  
And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth  
In form and shape compact and beautiful,  
In will, in action free, companionship,  
And thousand other signs of purer life ;

So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
A power more strong in beauty, born of us  
And fated to excel us, as we pass  
In glory that old Darkness: nor are we  
Thereby more conquered than by us the rule  
Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil  
Quarrel with the proud forests it hath fed,  
And feedeth still, more comely than itself?  
Can it deny the chieftdom of green groves?  
Or shall the tree be envious of the dove  
Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings  
To wander wherewithal and find its joys?  
We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs  
Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,  
But eagles golden-feather'd, who do tower  
Above us in their beauty, and must reign  
In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law  
That first in beauty should be first in might:  
Yea, by that law, another race may drive  
Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,  
My disposessor? Have ye seen his face?  
Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along  
By noble winged creatures he hath made?  
I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
That it enforced me to bid sad farewell  
To all my empire; farewell sad I took,  
And hither came, to see how dolorous fate  
Had wrought upon ye; and how I might best

Give consolation in this woe extreme.  
Receive the truth, and let it be your balm."

Whether through pozed conviction, or disdain,  
They guarded silence, when Oceanus  
Left murmuring, what deepest thought can tell?  
But so it was, none answer'd for a space,  
Save one whom none regarded, Clymene :  
And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,  
With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild,  
Thus wording timidly among the fierce :  
" O Father ! I am here the simplest voice,  
And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,  
And this thing woe crept in among our hearts,  
There to remain for ever, as I fear :  
I would not bode of evil, if I thought  
So weak a creature could turn off the help  
Which by just right should come of mighty Gods ;  
Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell  
Of what I heard, and how it made me weep,  
And know that we had parted from all hope.  
I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,  
Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land  
Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.  
Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief ;  
Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth ;  
So that I felt a movement in my heart  
To chide, and to reproach that solitude  
With songs of misery, music of our woes ;  
And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell

And murmur'd into it, and made melody—  
O melody no more ! for while I sang,  
And with poor skill let pass into the breeze  
The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand  
Just opposite, an island of the sea,  
There came enchantment with the shifting wind  
That did both drown and keep alive my ears  
I threw my shell away upon the sand,  
And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd  
With that new blissful golden melody.  
A living death was in each gush of sounds,  
Each family of rapturous hurried notes,  
That fell, one after one, yet all at once,  
Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their  
string :

And then another, then another strain,  
Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,  
To hover round my head, and make me sick  
Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,  
And I was stopping up my frantic ears,  
When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,  
A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,  
And still it cried, 'Apollo ! young Apollo !  
The morning-bright Apollo ! young Apollo !'  
I fled, it follow'd me, and cried, 'Apollo !'  
O Father, and O Brethren ! had ye felt  
Those pains of mine ! O Saturn, hadst thou felt,  
Ye would not call this too indulged tongue  
Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard !"

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook  
That, lingering along a pebbled coast,  
Dooth fear to meet the sea : but sea it met,  
And shudder'd ; for the overwhelming voice  
Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath :  
The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves  
In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,  
Came booming thus, while still upon his arm  
He lean'd ; not rising, from supreme contempt.  
“ Or shall we listen to the over-wise,  
Or to the over-foolish giant, Gods ?  
Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent,  
Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,  
Could agonize me more than baby-words  
In midst of this dethronement horrible.  
Speak ! roar ! shout ! yell ! ye sleepy Titans all  
Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile ?  
Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm ?  
Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,  
Thy scalding in the seas ? What ! have I roused  
Your spleens with so few simple words as these ?  
O joy ! for now I see ye are not lost :  
O joy ! for now I see a thousand eyes  
Wide glaring for revenge.”—As this he said,  
He lifted up his stature vast, and stood,  
Still without intermission speaking thus :  
“ Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to burn,  
And purge the ether of our enemies ;  
How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,

And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove,  
Stifling that puny essence in its tent.  
O let him feel the evil he hath done ;  
For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,  
Much pain have I for more than loss of realms :  
The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled ;  
Those days, all innocent of scathing war,  
When all the fair Existences of heaven  
Came open-eyed to guess what we would  
speak :—

That was before our brows were taught to frown,  
Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds ;  
That was before we knew the winged thing,  
Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced—  
Hyperion, lo ! his radiance is here !”

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,  
And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name  
Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,  
A pallid gleam across his features stern :  
Not savage, for he saw full many a God  
Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them all,  
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar locks  
Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel  
When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.  
In pale and silver silence they remain'd,  
Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,

Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,  
All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
And every gulf, and every chasm old,  
And every height, and every sullen depth,  
Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams :  
And all the everlasting cataracts,  
And all the headlong torrents far and near,  
Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,  
Now saw the light and made it terrible.  
It was Hyperion :—a granite peak  
His bright feet touch'd, and there he staid to

## VIEW

The misery his brilliance had betray'd  
To the most hateful seeing of itself.  
Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,  
Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade  
In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk  
Of Memnon's image at the set of sun  
To one who travels from the dusking East :  
Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp,  
He utter'd, while his hands, contemplative,  
He press'd together, and in silence stood.  
Despondence seized again the fallen Gods  
At sight of the dejected King of Day,  
And many hid their faces from the light :  
But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes  
Among the brotherhood ; and, at their glare,  
Uprose Iapetus, and Creüs too,  
And Phoreus, sea-born, and together strode  
To where he tower'd on his eminence.



There those four shouted forth old Saturn's name;  
Hyperion from the peak loud answer'd "Saturn!"  
Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,  
In whose face was no joy, though all the Gods  
Gave from their hollow throats the name of  
"Saturn!"

## HYPERION.

### BOOK III.

Thus in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
Amazed were those Titans utterly.  
O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their  
                    woes!

For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire:  
A solitary sorrow best befits  
Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.  
Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find  
Many a fallen old Divinity  
Wandering in vain about bewilder'd shores.  
Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,  
And not a wind of heaven but will breathe  
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute;  
For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.  
Flush every thing that hath a vermeil hue,  
Let the rose glow intense and warm the air,  
And let the clouds of even and of morn  
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills;

Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
Cold as a bubbling well; let faint-lipp'd shells,  
On sands or in great deeps, vermilion turn  
Through all their labyrinths; and let the maid  
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surprised.  
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,  
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,  
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,  
And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the shade:  
Apollo is once more the golden theme!  
Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun  
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers?  
Together had he left his mother fair  
And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,  
And in the morning twilight wander'd forth  
Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.  
The nightingale had ceased, and a few stars  
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush  
Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle  
There was no covert, no retired cave  
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,  
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.  
He listen'd; and he wept, and his bright tears  
Went trickling down the golden bow he held.  
Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,  
While from beneath some cumbrous boughs  
hard by  
With solemn step an awful Goddess came,

And there was purport in her looks for him,  
Which he with eager guess began to read  
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said:  
"How camest thou over the unfooted sea?  
Or bath that antique mien and robed form  
Moved in these vales invisible till now?  
Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping  
o'er

The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
In cool mid forest. Surely I have traced  
The rustle of those ample skirts about  
These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers  
Lift up their heads, and still the whisper pass'd.  
Goddess! I have beheld those eyes before,  
And their eternal calm, and all that face,  
Or I have dream'd."—"Yes," said the supreme  
shape,

"Thou hast dream'd of me; and awaking up  
Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,  
Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers, all the  
vast

Unwearied ear of the whole universe  
Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth  
Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not strange  
That thou shouldst weep, so gifted? Tell me,  
youth,

What sorrow thou canst feel; for I am sad  
When thou dost shed a tear: explain thy griefs  
To one who in this lonely isle hath been  
The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life.

From the young day when first thy infant hand  
Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till thine arm  
Could bend that bow heroic to all times.  
Show thy heart's secret to an ancient Power  
Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones  
For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
Of loveliness new-born."—Apollo then,  
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,  
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat  
Throbb'd with the syllables:—" Mnemosyne!  
Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how;  
Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest?  
Why should I strive to show what from thy lips  
Would come no mystery? For me, dark, dark,  
And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes:  
I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
Until a melancholy numbs my limbs;  
And then upon the grass I sit, and moan,  
Like one who once had wings.—O why should I  
Feel cursed and thwarted, when the liegeless air  
Yields to my step aspirant? why should I  
Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet?  
Goddess benign! point forth some unknown  
thing:  
Are there not other regions than this isle?  
What are the stars? There is the sun, the sun!  
And the most patient brilliance of the moon!  
And stars by thousands! Point me out the way  
To any one particular beauteous star,  
And I will flit into it with my lyre,

And make its silvery splendour pant with bliss.  
I have heard the cloudy thunder: Where is  
power?

Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity  
Makes this alarm in the elements,  
While I here idle listen on the shores  
In fearless yet in aching ignorance?  
O tell me, lonely Goddess! by thy harp,  
That waileth every morn and eventide,  
Tell me why thus I rave, about these groves!  
Mute thou remainest—Mute? yet I can read  
A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:  
Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.  
Names, deeds, grey legends, dire events, rebel-  
lions,

Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,  
Creations and destroyings, all at once  
Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
And dally me, as if some blithe wine  
Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,  
And so become immortal."—Thus the God,  
While his enkindled eyes, with level glance  
Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast kept  
Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.  
Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush  
All the immortal fairness of his limbs:  
Most like the struggle at the gate of death;  
Or liker still to one who should take leave  
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse

Die into life : so young Apollo anguish'd ;  
 His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
 Kept undulation round his eager neck.  
 During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
 Her arms as one who prophesied.—At length  
 Apollo shriek'd ;—and lo ! from all his limbs  
 Celestial                •                •                •                •  
                              •                •                •                •                •





## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

What more felicity can fall to creature  
Than to enjoy delight with liberty?

*Fate of the Butterfly.*—SPENSER.

## DEDICATION.

TO LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.

GLORY and loveliness have pass'd away;  
For if we wander out in early morn,  
No wreathed incense do we see upborne  
Into the east to meet the smiling day:  
No crowds of nymphs soft-voiced and young and gay  
In woven baskets bringing ears of corn,  
Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn  
The shrine of Flora in her early May.  
But there are left delights as high as these.  
And I shall ever bless my destiny,  
That in a time when under pleasant trees  
Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free,  
A leafy luxury, seeing I could please  
With these poor offerings, a man like thee.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Places of nestling green for poets made.—*Story of Rimini*

I stood tiptoe upon a little hill,  
The air was cooling, and so very still,  
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride  
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,  
Their scanty-leaved, and finely-tapering stems,  
Had not yet lost their starry diadems  
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.  
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new  
    shorn,  
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they  
    slept  
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there  
    crept  
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,  
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves;  
For not the faintest motion could be seen  
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.  
There was wide wandering for the greediest eye,  
To peer about upon variety;

Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,  
And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;  
To picture out the quaint and curious bending  
Of a fresh woodland alley never-ending;  
Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,  
Guess where the jaunty streams refresh them-  
selves.

I gazed awhile, and felt as light, and free  
As though the fanning wings of Mercury  
Had play'd upon my heels : I was light-hearted,  
And many pleasures to my vision started ;  
So I straightway began to pluck a posy  
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft and rosy.  
A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them ;  
All, sure no tasteful nook could be without them !  
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,  
And let long grass grow round the roots, to keep  
them  
Moist, cool, and green ; and shade the violets,  
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

A filbert-hedge with wild-briar overtwined,  
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind  
Upon their summer thrones ; there too should be  
The frequent-chequer of a youngling tree,  
That with a score of light green brethren shoots  
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots :  
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear  
waters,  
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters,

The spreading blue-bells: it may haply mourn  
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn  
From their fresh beds, and scatter'd thoughtlessly  
By infant hands, left on the path to die.

Open afresh your round of starry folds,  
Ye ardent marigolds!  
Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,  
For great Apollo bids  
That in these days your praises should be sung  
On many harps, which he has lately strung;  
And when again your dewiness he kisses,  
Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses:  
So haply when I rove in some far vale,  
His mighty voice may come upon the gale.

Here are sweet peas, on tiptoe for a flight:  
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,  
And taper fingers catching at all things,  
To bind them all about with tiny rings.  
Linger awhile upon some bending planks  
That lean against a streamlet's rushy banks,  
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings:  
They will be found softer than ring-doves' cooings.  
How silent comes the water round that bend!  
Not the minutest whisper does it send  
To the o'erhanging sallows: blades of grass  
Slowly across the chequer'd shadows pass.  
Why you might read two sonnets, ere they reach  
To where the hurrying freshnesses aye preach

A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds ;  
Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,  
Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,  
To taste the luxury of sunny beams  
Temper'd with coolness. How they ever wrestle  
With their own sweet delight, and ever nestle  
Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand !  
If you but scantily hold out the hand,  
That very instant not one will remain :  
But turn your eye, and they are there again.  
The ripples seem right glad to reach those

places,

And cool themselves among the emerald tresses ;  
The while they cool themselves, they freshness  
give,

And moisture, that the bowery green may live :  
So keeping up an interchange of favours,  
Like good men in the truth of their behaviours.  
Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop  
From low-hung branches : little space they stop ;  
But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek ;  
Then off at once, as in a wanton freak :  
Or perhaps, to show their black and golden  
wings,

Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.  
Were I in such a place, I sure should pray  
That nought less sweet might call my thoughts  
away,

Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown  
Fanning away the dandelion's down ;

Than the light music of her nimble toes

Patting against the sorrel as she goes.

How she would start, and blush, thus to be  
caught

Playing in all her innocence of thought !

O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,

Watch her half-smiling lips and downward look ;

O let me for one moment touch her wrist ;

Let me one moment to her breathing list ;

And as she leaves me, may she often turn

Her fair eyes looking through her locks auburne.

What next ? a tuft of evening primroses,

O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes ;

O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,

But that 'tis ever startled by the leap

Of buds into ripe flowers ; or by the flitting

Of divers moths, that aye their rest are quitting ;

Or by the moon lifting her silver rim

Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim

Coming into the blue with all her light.

O Maker of sweet poets ! dear delight

Of this fair world and all its gentle lovers ;

Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers,

Mingler with leaves, and dew and tumbling  
streams,

Closer of lovely eyes to lovely dreams,

Lover of loneliness, and wandering,

Of upcast eye, and tender pondering !

Thee must I praise above all other glories

That smile us on to tell delightful stories.

For what has made the sage or poet write  
But the fair paradise of Nature's light?  
In the calm grandeur of a sober line,  
We see the waving of the mountain pine;  
And when a tale is beautifully staid,  
We feel the safety of a hawthorn glade:  
When it is moving on luxurious wings,  
The soul is lost in pleasant smotherings:  
Fair dewy roses brush against our faces,  
And flowering laurels spring from diamond  
vases;

O'erhead we see the jasmine and sweet-briar,  
And bloomy grapes laughing from green attire;  
While at our feet, the voice of crystal bubbles  
Charms us at once away from all our troubles:  
So that we feel uplifted from the world,  
Walking upon the white clouds wreath'd and  
curl'd.

So felt he, who first told how Psyche went  
On the smooth wind to realms of wonderment;  
What Psyche felt, and Love, when their full lips  
First touch'd; what amorous and fondling nips  
They gave each other's cheeks; with all their  
sighs,

And how they kist each other's tremulous eyes:  
The silver lamp,—the ravishment—the wonder—  
The darkness—loneliness—the fearful thunder;  
Their woes gone by, and both to heaven up  
flown,

To bow for gratitude before Jove's throne.



So did he reel, who pull'd the boughs aside,  
That we might look into a forest wide,  
To catch a glimpse of Fauns, and Dryades  
Coming with softest rustle through the trees ;  
And garlands woven of flowers wild, and sweet,  
Upheld on ivory wrists, or sporting feet :  
Telling us how fair trembling Syrinx fled  
Arcadian Pan, with such a fearful dread.  
Poor Nymph,—poor Pan,—how did he weep to  
find

Nought but a lovely sighing of the wind  
Along the reedy stream ! a half-heard strain,  
Full of sweet desolation—balmy pain.

What first inspired a bard of old to sing  
Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring ?  
In some delicious ramble, he had found  
A little space, with boughs all woven round ;  
And in the midst of all, a clearer pool  
'Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool  
The blue sky, here and there serenely peeping,  
Through tendril wreaths fantastically creeping.  
And on the bank a lonely flower he spied,  
A meek and forlorn flower, with nought of pride.  
Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness,  
To woo its own sad image into nearness :  
Deaf to light Zephyrus it would not move ;  
But still would seem to droop, to pine, to love.  
So while the poet stood in this sweet spot,  
Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy shot ;

Nor was it long ere he had told the tale  
Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale.

Where had he been, from whose warm head  
outflew

That sweetest of all songs, that ever new,  
That aye refreshing, pure deliciousness,  
Coming ever to bless  
The wanderer by moonlight? to him bringing  
Shapes from the invisible world, unearthly  
singing

From out the middle air, from flowery nests,  
And from the pillowy silkiness that rests  
Full in the speculation of the stars.  
Ah! surely he had burst our mortal bars;  
Into some wondrous region he had gone,  
To search for thee, divine Endymion!

He was a Poet, sure a lover too,  
Who stood on Latmus' top, what time there blew  
Soft breezes from the myrtle vale below;  
And brought, in faintness solemn, sweet, and slow  
A hymn from Dian's temple; while upswelling,  
The incense went to her own starry dwelling.  
But though her face was clear as infants' eyes,  
Though she stood smiling o'er the sacrifice,  
The poet wept at her so piteous fate,  
Wept that such beauty should be desolate:  
So in fine wrath some golden sounds he won,  
And gave meek Cynthia her Endymion.

Queen of the wide air ; thou most lovely queen  
Of all the brightness that mine eyes have seen !  
As thou exceedest all things in thy shine,  
So every tale does this sweet tale of thine.  
O for three words of honey, that I might  
Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night !

Where distant ships do seem to show their  
    keels,  
Phœbus awhile delay'd his mighty wheels,  
And turn'd to smile upon thy bashful eyes,  
Ere he his unseen pomp would solemnize.  
The evening weather was so bright, and clear,  
That men of health were of unusual cheer ;  
Stepping like Homer at the trumpet's call,  
Or young Apollo on the pedestal :  
And lovely women were as fair and warm,  
As Venus looking sideways in alarm.  
The breezes were ethereal, and pure,  
And crept through half-closed lattices to cure  
The languid sick : it cool'd their fever'd sleep,  
And soothed them into slumbers full and deep.  
Soon they awoke clear-eyed : nor burn'd with  
    thirsting,  
Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples bursting :  
And springing up, they met the wondering sight  
Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with delight  
Who feel their arms, and breasts, and kiss, and  
    stare,  
And on their placid foreheads part the hair.

Young men and maidens at each other gazed,  
With hands held back, and motionless, amazed  
To see the brightness in each other's eyes ;  
And so they stood, fill'd with a sweet surprise,  
Until their tongues were loosed in poesy.  
Therefore no lover did of anguish die :  
But the soft numbers, in that moment spoken,  
Made silken ties, that never may be broken.  
Cynthia ! I cannot tell the greater blisses  
That follow'd thine, and thy dear shepherd's  
          kisses :  
Was there a poet born ?—But now no more—  
My wandering spirit must no farther soar.

## SPECIMEN OF AN INDUCTION TO A POEM

Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry ;  
For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye.  
Not like the formal crest of latter days :  
But bending in a thousand graceful ways ;  
So graceful, that it seems no mortal hand,  
Or e'en the touch of Archimago's wand,  
Could charm them into such an attitude.  
We must think rather, that in playful mood  
Some mountain breeze had turn'd its chief delight  
To show this wonder of its gentle might.  
Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry ;  
For while I muse, the lance points slantingly  
Athwart the morning air ; some lady sweet,  
Who cannot feel for cold her tender feet,  
From the worn top of some old battlement  
Hails it with tears, her stout defender sent ;  
And from her own pure self no joy dissembling.  
Wraps round her ample robe with happy trem-  
bling.  
Sometimes when the good knight his rest could  
take,  
It is reflected, clearly, in a lake,

With the young ashen boughs, 'gainst which it rests,  
And th' half-seen mossiness of linnets' nests.

Ah! shall I ever tell its cruelty,  
When the fire flashes from a warrior's eye,  
And his tremendous hand is grasping it,  
And his dark brow for very wrath is knit?  
Or when his spirit, with more calm intent  
Leaps to the honours of a tournament,  
And makes the gazers round about the ring  
Stare at the grandeur of the balancing?  
No, no! this is far off:—then how shall I  
Revive the dying tones of minstrelsy,  
Which linger yet about long gothic arches,  
In dark green ivy, and among wild larches?  
How sing the splendour of the revelries,  
When butts of wine are drunk off to the lees?  
And that bright lance, against the fretted wall,  
Beneath the shade of stately banneral,  
Is slung with shining cuirass, sword, and shield?  
Where ye may see a spur in bloody field,  
Light-footed damsels move with gentle paces  
Round the wide hall, and show their happy faces  
Or stand in courtly talk by fives and sevens:  
Like those fair stars that twinkle in the heavens.  
Yet must I tell a tale of chivalry:  
Or wherefore comes that knight so proudly by?  
Wherefore more proudly does the gentle knight  
Rein in the swelling of his ample might?  
Spenser! thy brows are arched, open, kind,  
And come like a clear sun-rise to my mind;

And always does my heart with pleasure dance,  
When I think on thy noble countenance :  
Where never yet was aught more earthly seen  
Than the pure freshness of thy laurels green.  
Therefore, great bard, I not so fearfully  
Call on thy gentle spirit to hover nigh  
My daring steps : or if thy tender care,  
Thus startled unaware,  
Be jealous that the foot of other wight  
Should madly follow that bright path of light  
Traced by thy loved *Libertas* ; he will speak,  
And tell thee that my prayer is very meek ;  
That I will follow with due reverence,  
And start with awe at mine own strange pretence  
Him thou wilt hear ; so I will rest in hope  
To see wide plains, fair trees, and lawny slope ;  
The morn, the eve, the light, the shade, the  
    flowers ;  
Clear streams, smooth lakes, and overlooking  
    towers.

## CALIDORE.

### A FRAGMENT.

YOUNG Calidore is paddling o'er the lake;  
His healthful spirit eager and awake  
To feel the beauty of a silent eve,  
Which seem'd full loth this happy world to  
leave,

The light dwelt o'er the scene so lingeringly.  
He bares his forehead to the cool blue sky,  
And smiles at the far clearness all around,  
Until his heart is well nigh overwound,  
And turns for calmness to the pleasant green  
Of easy slopes, and shadowy trees that lean  
So elegantly o'er the waters' brim  
And show their blossoms trim.  
Scarce can his clear and nimble eyesight follow  
The freaks and dartings of the black-wing'd  
swallow,

Delighting much, to see it half at rest,  
Dip so refreshingly its wings and breast  
'Gainst the smooth surface, and to mark anon,  
The widening circles into nothing gone.



And now the sharp keel of his little boat  
Comes up with ripple, and with easy float  
And glides into a bed of water-lilies :  
Broad-leaved are they, and their white canopies  
Are upward turn'd to catch the heavens' dew.  
Near to a little island's point they grew ;  
Whence Calidore might have the goodliest view  
Of this sweet spot of earth. The bowery shore  
Went off in gentle windings to the hoar  
And light blue mountains : but no breathing



With a warm heart, and eye prepared to scan  
Nature's clear beauty, could pass lightly by  
Objects that look'd out so invitingly  
On either side. These, gentle Calidore  
Greeted, as he had known them long before.

The sidelong view of swelling leafiness,  
Which the glad setting sun in gold doth dress,  
Whence, ever and anon, the joy outsprings,  
And scales upon the beauty of its wings.

The lonely turret, shatter'd, and outworn,  
Stands venerably proud ; too proud to mourn  
Its long-lost grandeur : fir-trees grow around,  
Aye dropping their hard fruit upon the ground.  
The little chapel, with the cross above,  
Upholding wreaths of ivy ; the white dove,  
That on the windows spreads his feathers light,  
And seems from purple clouds to wing its flight.

Green tufted islands casting their soft shades  
Across the lake ; sequester'd leafy glades,  
That through the dimness of their twilight show  
Large dock-leaves, spiral foxgloves, or the glow  
Of the wild cat's-eyes, or the silvery stems  
Of delicate birch-trees, or long grass which hems  
A little brook. The youth had long been viewing  
These pleasant things, and heaven was bedewing  
The mountain flowers, when his glad senses  
caught

A trumpet's silver voice. Ah ! it was fraught  
With many joys for him : the warder's ken  
Had found white coursers prancing in the glen  
Friends very dear to him he soon will see ;  
So pushes off his boat most eagerly.  
And soon upon the lake he skims along,  
Deaf to the nightingale's first under-song ;  
Nor minds he the white swans that dream so  
sweetly :

His spirit flies before him so completely.  
And now he turns a jutting point of land,  
Whence may be seen the castle gloomy and  
grand :

Nor will a bee buzz round two swelling peaches,  
Before the point of his light shallop reaches  
Those marble steps that through the water dip :  
Now over them he goes with hasty trip,  
And scarcely stays to ope the folding doors :  
Anon he leaps along the oaken floors  
Of halls and corridors.

Delicious sounds ! those little bright-eyed  
things

That float about the air on azure wings,  
Had been less heartfelt by him than the clang  
Of clattering hoofs ; into the court he sprang,  
Just as two noble steeds, and palfreys twain,  
Were slanting out their necks with loosen'd rein ;  
While from beneath the threatening portcullis  
They brought their happy burthens. What a  
kiss,

What gentle squeeze he gave each lady's hand !  
How tremblingly their delicate ankles spann'd !  
Into how sweet a trance his soul was gone,  
While whisperings of affection  
Made him delay to let their tender feet  
Come to the earth ; with an incline so sweet  
From their low palfreys o'er his neck they bent :  
And whether there were tears of languishment,  
Or that the evening dew had pearl'd their tresses,  
He feels a moisture on his cheek, and blesses  
With lips that tremble, and with glistening eye,  
All the soft luxury

That nestled in his arms. A dimpled hand,  
Fair as some wonder out of fairy land,  
Hung from his shoulder like the drooping flowers  
Of whitest Cassia, fresh from summer showers :  
And this he fondled with his happy cheek,  
As if for joy he would no further seek :  
When the kind voice of good Sir Clerimond  
Came to his ear, like something from beyond

His present being : so he gently drew  
His warm arms, thrilling now with pulses new,  
From their sweet thrall, and forward gently  
bending,  
Thank'd Heaven that his joy was never-ending ;  
While 'gainst his forehead he devoutly press'd  
A hand Heaven made to succour the dis-  
tress'd ;  
A hand that from the world's bleak promontory  
Had lifted Calidore for deeds of Glory.

Amid the pages, and the torches' glare,  
There stood a knight, patting the flowing hair  
Of his proud horse's mane : he was withal  
A man of elegance, and stature tall :  
So that the waving of his plumes would be  
High as the berries of a wild ash tree,  
Or as the winged cap of Mercury.  
His armour was so dexterously wrought  
In shape, that sure no living man had thought  
It hard and heavy steel : but that indeed  
It was some glorious form, some splendid weed,  
In which a spirit new come from the skies  
Might live, and show itself to human eyes.  
'Tis the far-famed, the brave Sir Gondibert,  
Said the good man to Calidore alert ;  
While the young warrior with a step of grace  
Came up,—a courtly smile upon his face,  
And mailed hand held out, ready to greet  
The large-eyed wonder, and ambitious heat

Of the aspiring boy ; who as he led  
Those smiling ladies, often turn'd his head  
To admire the visor arch'd so gracefully  
Over a knightly brow ; while they went by  
The lamps that from the high-roof'd hall were  
pendent,  
And gave the steel a shining quite transcendent.

Soon in a pleasant chamber they are seated,  
The sweet-lipp'd ladies have already greeted  
All the green leaves that round the window clamber,  
To show their purple stars, and bells of amber.  
Sir Gondibert has doff'd his shining steel,  
Gladdening in the free and airy feel  
Of a light mantle ; and while Clerimond  
Is looking round about him with a fond  
And placid eye, young Calidore is burning  
To hear of knightly deeds, and gallant spurning  
Of all unworthiness ; and how the strong of arm  
Kept off dismay, and terror, and alarm  
From lovely woman : while brimful of this,  
He gave each damsel's hand so warm a kiss,  
And had such manly ardour in his eye,  
That each at other look'd half-staringly :  
And then their features started into smiles,  
Sweet as blue heavens o'er enchanted isles.  
Softly the breezes from the forest came,  
Softly they blew aside the taper's flame ;  
Clear was the song from Philomel's far bower ;  
Grateful the incense from the lime-tree flower ;

Mysterious, wild, the far-heard trumpet's tone;  
Lovely the moon in ether, all alone :  
Sweet too the converse of these happy mortals,  
As that of busy spirits when the portals  
Are closing in the West : or that soft humming  
We hear around when Hesperus is coming.  
Sweet be their sleep. \* \* \* \* \*

## TO SOME LADIES,

### ON RECEIVING A CURIOUS SHELL.

WHAT though, while the wonders of nature exploring,

I cannot your light, mazy footsteps attend ,  
Nor listen to accents, that almost adoring,  
Bless Cynthia's face, the enthusiast's friend :

Yet over the steep, whence the mountain-stream  
rushes,

With you, kindest friends, in idea I rove ,  
Mark the clear tumbling crystal, its passionate  
gushes,

Its spray, that a wild flower kindly bedews.

Why linger ye so, the wild labyrinth strolling ?

Why breathless, unable your bliss to declare ?  
Ah ! you list to the nightingale's tender condoling,  
Responsive to sylphs, in the moon-beamy air.

'Tis morn, and the flowers with dew are yet drooping,

I see you are treading the verge of the sea :  
And now ! ah, I see it—you just now are stooping  
To pick up the keepsake intended for me.

If a cherub, on pinions of silver descending,  
Had brought me a gem from the fretwork of  
Heaven;  
And smiles with his star-cheering voice sweetly  
blending,  
The blessings of T'ghe had melodiously given ;

It had not created a warmer emotion  
Than the present, fair nymphs, I was blest with  
from you ;  
Than the shell, from the bright golden sands of  
the ocean,  
Which the emerald waves at your feet gladly  
threw.

For, indeed, 'tis a sweet and peculiar pleasure,  
(And blissful is he who such happiness finds,)  
To possess but a span of the hour of leisure  
In elegant, pure, and aerial minds.



ON RECEIVING A COPY OF VERSES FROM  
THE SAME LADIES.

Hast thou from the caves of Golconda, a gem  
Pure as the ice-drop that froze on the mountain?  
Bright as the humming-bird's green dialem,  
When it flutters in sunbeams that shine through  
a fountain?

Hast thou a goblet for dark sparkling wine?  
That goblet right heavy, and massy, and gold?  
And splendidly mark'd with the story divine  
Of Armida the fair, and Rinaldo the bold?

Hast thou a steed with a mane richly flowing?  
Hast thou a sword that thine enemy's smart is?  
Hast thou a trumpet rich melodies blowing?  
And wear'st thou the shield of the famed Bri-  
tomartis?

What is it that hangs from thy shoulder so brave,  
Embroider'd with many a spring-peering  
flower?

Is it a scarf that thy fair lady gave?  
And hastest thou now to that fair lady's bower?

Ah ! courteous Sir Knight, with large joy thou  
art crown'd ;

Full many the glories that brighten thy youth !  
I will tell thee my blisses, which richly abound  
In magical powers to bless and to soothe.

On this scroll thou seest written in characters fair  
A sun-beaming tale of a wreath, and a chain :  
And, warrior, it nurtures the property rare  
Of charming my mind from the trammels of pain.

This canopy mark : 'tis the work of a fay ;  
Beneath its rich shade did King Oberon languish,

When lovely Titania was far, far away,  
And cruelly left him to sorrow and anguish.

There, oft would he bring from his soft-sighing  
lute

Wild strains to which, spell-bound, the night-  
ingales listen'd !

The wondering spirits of Heaven were mute,  
And tears 'mong the dewdrops of morning oft  
glisten'd.

In this little dome, all those melodies strange,  
Soft, plaintive, and melting, for ever will sigh ;  
Nor e'er will the notes from their tenderness  
change,  
Nor e'er will the music of Oberon die.

So when I am in a voluptuous vein,  
I pillow my head on the sweets of the rose,  
And list to the tale of the wreath, and the chain,  
Till its echoes depart ; then I sink to repose.

Adieu ! valiant Eric ! with joy thou art crown'd,  
Full many the glories that brighten thy youth  
I too have my blisses, which richly abound  
In magical powers to bless, and to soothe

TO ———.

HADST thou lived in days of old,  
O what wonders had been told  
Of thy lively countenance,  
And thy humid eyes, that dance  
In the midst of their own brightness,  
In the very fane of lightness ;  
Over which thine eyebrows, leaning,  
Picture out each lovely meaning :  
In a dainty bend they lie,  
Like the streaks across the sky,  
Or the feathers from a crow,  
Fallen on a bed of snow.  
Of thy dark hair, that extends  
Into many graceful bends :  
As the leaves of hellebore  
Turn to whence they sprung before,  
And behind each ample curl  
Peeps the richness of a pearl.  
Downward too flows many a tress  
With a glossy waviness,  
Full, and round like globes that rise  
From the censer to the skies

Through sunny hair. Add too, the sweetness  
Of thy honied voice ; the neatness  
Of thine ankle lightly turn'd :  
With those beauties scarce discern'd,  
Kept with such sweet privacy,  
That they seldom meet the eye  
Of the little Loves that fly  
Round about with eager pry.  
Saving when with freshening lave,  
Thou dipp'st them in the taintless wave :  
Like twin water-lilies, born  
In the coolness of the morn.  
O, if thou hadst breathed then,  
Now the Muses had been ten.  
Couldst thou wish for lineage higher  
Than twin-sister of 'Thalia ?  
At least for ever, evermore  
Will I call the Graces four.  
Hadst thou lived when chivalry  
Lifted up her lance on high,  
Tell me what thou wouldst have been ?  
Ah ! I see the silver sheen  
Of thy broider'd-floating vest  
Covering half thine ivory breast :  
Which, O Heavens ! I should see,  
But that cruel Destiny  
Has placed a golden cuirass there,  
Keeping secret what is fair.  
Like sunbeams in a cloudlet nested,  
Thy locks in knightly casque are rested :

O'er which bend four milky plumes,  
Like the gentle lily's blooms  
Springing from a costly vase.  
See with what a stately pace  
Comes thine alabaster steed ;  
Servant of heroic deed !  
O'er his loins, his trappings glow  
Like the northern lights on snow.  
Mount his back ! thy sword unsheath !  
Sign of the enchanter's death ;  
Bane of every wicked spell ;  
Silencer of dragon's yell.  
Alas ! thou this wilt never do :  
Thou art an enchantress too,  
And wilt surely never spill  
Blood of those whose eyes can kill

## TO HOPE.

WHEN by my solitary hearth I sit,  
And hateful thoughts enwrap my soul in  
gloom ;  
When no fair dreams before my " mind's eye " flit,  
And the bare heath of life presents no bloom ;  
Sweet Hope ! ethereal balm upon me shed,  
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head.

Whene'er I wander, at the fall of night,  
Where woven boughs shut out the moon's  
bright ray,  
Should sad Despondency my musings fright,  
And frown, to drive fair Cheerfulness away,  
Peep with the moonbeams through the leafy roof,  
And keep that fiend Despondence far aloof.

Should Disappointment, parent of Despair,  
Strive for her son to seize my careless heart  
When, like a cloud, he sits upon the air,  
Preparing on his spell-bound prey to dart :  
Chase him away, sweet Hope, with visage bright,  
And fright him, as the morning frightens night !

Whene'er the fate of those I hold most dear  
Tells to my fearful breast a tale of sorrow,  
O bright-eyed Hope, my morbid fancy cheer;  
Let me awhile thy sweetest comforts borrow:  
Thy heaven-born radiance around me shed,  
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head!

Should e'er unhappy love my bosom pain,  
From cruel parents, or relentless fair,  
O let me think it is not quite in vain  
To sigh out sonnets to the midnight air!  
Sweet Hope! ethereal balm upon me shed,  
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head!

In the long vista of the years to roll,  
Let me not see our country's honour fade!  
O let me see our land retain her soul!  
Her pride, her freedom; and not freedom's  
shade.  
From thy bright eyes unusual brightness shed—  
Beneath thy pinions canopy my head!

Let me not see the patriot's high bequest;  
Great liberty! how great in plain attire!  
With the base purple of a court oppress'd,  
Bowing her head, and ready to expire:  
But let me see thee stoop from Heaven on  
wings  
That fill the skies with silver glitterings!



And as, in sparkling majesty, a star  
    Gilds the bright summit of some gloomy  
        cloud ;  
Brightening the half-veil'd face of heaven afar :  
    So, when dark thoughts my boding spirit  
        shroud,  
Sweet Hope ! celestial influence round me shed,  
Waving thy silver pinions o'er my head.

*February 1815*

## IMITATION OF SPENSER.

Now morning from her orient chamber came  
And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant hill :  
Crowning its lawny crest with amber flame,  
Silvering the untainted gushes of its rill :  
Which, pure from mossy beds, did down distil  
And after parting beds of simple flowers,  
By many streams a little lake did fill,  
Which round its marge reflected woven  
          bowers,  
And, in its middle space, a sky that never  
          lowers.

There the kingfisher saw his plumage bright,  
Vying with fish of brilliant dye below ;  
Whose silken fins' and golden scales' light  
Cast upward, through the waves, a ruby glow .  
There saw the swan his neck of arched snow,  
And oar'd himself along with majesty :  
Sparkled his jetty eyes ; his feet did show  
Beneath the waves like Afric's ebony,  
And on his back a fay reclined voluptuously.

Ah ! could I tell the wonders of an isle  
That in that fairest lake had placed been,  
I could e'en Dido of her grief beguile ;  
Or rob from aged Lear his bitter teen :  
For sure so fair a place was never seen  
Of all that ever charm'd romantic eye :  
It seem'd an emerald in the silver sheen  
Of the bright waters ; or as when on high,  
Through clouds of fleecy white, laughs the cœr-  
lean sky.

And all around it dipp'd luxuriously  
Slopings of verdure through the glossy tide,  
Which, as it were in gentle amity,  
Rippled delighted up the flowery side ;  
As if to glean the ruddy tears it tried,  
Which fell profusely from the rose-tree stem !  
Haply it was the workings of its pride,  
In strife to throw upon the shore a gem  
Outvying all the buds in Flora's diadem.

• • • •

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WOMAN ! when I behold thee flippant, vain,  
Inconstant, childish, proud, and full of fancies ;  
Without that modest softening that enhances  
The downcast eye, repentant of the pain

That its mild light creates to heal again ;  
E'en then, elate, my spirit leaps and prances,  
E'en then my soul with exultation dances  
For that to love, so long, I've dormant lain :  
But when I see thee meek, and kind, and tender  
Heavens ! how desperately do I adore  
Thy winning graces ;—to be thy defender  
I hotly burn—to be a Calidore—  
A very Red Cross Knight—a stout Leander—  
Might I be loved by thee like these of yore.

Light feet, dark violet eyes, and parted hair ;  
Soft dimpled hands, white neck, and creamy  
breast ;  
Are things on which the dazzled senses rest  
Till the fond, fixed eyes, forget they stare.  
From such fine pictures, Heavens ! I cannot dare  
To turn my admiration, though unpossess'd  
They be of what is worthy,—though not drest,  
In lovely modesty, and virtues rare.  
Yet these I leave as thoughtless as a lark ;  
These lures I straight forget,—e'en ere I dine,  
Or thrice my palate moisten : but when I mark  
Such charms with mild intelligences shine,  
My ear is open like a greedy shark,  
To catch the tunings of a voice divine.

Ah ! who can e'er forget so fair a being ?  
Who can forget her half-retiring sweets ?  
God ! she is like a milk-white lamb that bleats  
For man's protection. Surely the All-seeing,

Who joys to see us with his gifts agreeing,  
Will never give him pinions, who intreats  
Such innocence to ruin,—who vilely cheats  
A dove-like bosom. In truth there is no freeing  
One's thoughts from such a beauty; when I hear  
A lay that once I saw her hand awake,  
Her form seems floating palpable, and near:  
Had I e'er seen her from an arbour take  
A dewy flower, oft would that hand appear,  
And o'er my eyes the trembling moisture shake.

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :  
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thy happiness,—  
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been  
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delv'd earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,  
Dance, and Provencal song, and sun-burnt  
mirth!

O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth ;  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the forest dim

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known:  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret

Here, where men sit and hear each other groan  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and  
dies ;

Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs ;  
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-  
morrow.

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :  
Already with thee ! tender is the night,  
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;  
But here there is no light,  
Save what from heaven is with the breezes  
blown  
Through verdurous glooms and winding  
mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month endows

The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;  
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;  
Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;  
And mid-May's eldest child,  
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen ; and for many a time  
I have been half in love with easeful Death,  
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
To take into the air my quiet breath ;  
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy !  
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in  
vain—  
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !  
No hungry generations tread thee down ;  
The voice I hear, this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown :  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for  
home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;  
The same that oft-times hath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.



Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell

To toll me back from thee to my sole self !

Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well

As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades

Past the near meadows, over the still stream,

Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades :

Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?

Fled is that music :—do I wake or sleep ?

## ODE ON A GRECIAN URN.

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness !

Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express

A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme :  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape  
Of deities or mortals, or of both,

In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ? [loath ?  
What men or gods are these ? what maidens  
What mad pursuit ? What struggle to escape ?  
What pipes and timbrels ? What wild  
ecstasy ?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard

Are sweeter ; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on ;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd

Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone :  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not  
leave

Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare ;  
Bold Lover, never, never, canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve ;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy  
bliss,

For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair !

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new.  
More happy love! more happy, happy love!  
For ever warm, and still to be enjoy'd,  
For ever panting and for ever young;  
All breathing human passion far above,  
That leaves a heart high sorrowful and  
cloy'd,  
A burning forehead, and a parching  
tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
And all her silken flanks with garlands  
drest?

What little town by river or sea-shore,  
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?  
Ah! little town, thy streets for evermore  
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede  
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
With forest branches and the trodden weed;  
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of  
thought.

As doth eternity : Cold Pastoral !

When old age shall this generation waste,

Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou  
say'st,

" Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

## ODE TO PSYCHE.

O GODDESS ! hear these tuneless numbers wrung  
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,  
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung,  
Even into thine own soft-conched ear :  
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see  
The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes ?  
I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,  
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,  
Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side  
In deepest grass, beneath the whispering roof  
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran  
A brooklet, scarce espied :  
'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers fragrant-eyed,  
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,  
'They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass ;  
Their arms embraced, and their pinions too ;  
Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu,  
As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,  
And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
At tender eye-dawn of aureorean love :  
The winged boy I knew ;  
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove ?  
His Psyche true

O latest-born and loveliest vision far  
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy !  
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star,  
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky ;  
Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,  
Nor altar heap'd with flowers ;  
Nor Virgin-choir to make delicious moan  
Upon the midnight hours ;  
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet  
From chain-swung censer teeming ;  
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.  
O brightest ! though too late for antique vows,  
Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,  
When holy were the haunted forest boughs,  
Holy the air, the water, and the fire ;  
Yet even in these days so far retired  
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,  
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,  
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.  
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
Upon the midnight hours !  
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet  
From winged censer teeming :  
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane  
In some untrodden region of my mind, [pain,  
Where branched thoughts, new-grown with pleasant  
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind :

Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd trees  
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by  
steep;  
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and  
bees,  
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep;  
And in the midst of this wide quietness  
A rosy sanctuary will I dress  
With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,  
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,  
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,  
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the  
same;  
And there shall be for thee all soft delight  
That shadowy thought can win,  
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,  
To let the warm Love in!

## FANCY.

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home :  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth ;  
Then let winged Fancy wander  
Through the thought still spread beyond her :  
Open wide the mind's cage door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar,  
O sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming ;  
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,  
Cloy with tasting : What do then ?  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear faggot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night ;  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon ;  
When the Night doth meet the Noon



In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.  
Sit thee there, and send abroad,  
With a mind self-overawed,  
Fancy, high-commission'd :—send her !  
She has vassals to attend her :  
She will bring, in spite of frost,  
Beauties that the earth hath lost ;  
She will bring thee, all together,  
All delights of summer weather ;  
All the buds and bells of May,  
From dewy sward or thorny spray ;  
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,  
With a still, mysterious stealth :  
She will mix these pleasures up  
Like three fit wines in a cup,  
And thou shalt quaff it :—thou shalt hear  
Distant harvest-carols clear ;  
Rustle of the reaped corn ;  
Sweet birds antheming the morn :  
And, in the same moment—hark !  
'Tis the early April lark,  
Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
Foraging for sticks and straw.  
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
The daisy and the marigold ;  
White-plumed lilies, and the first  
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst ;  
Shaded hyacinth, alway  
Sapphire queen of the mid-May ;

And every leaf, and every flower  
Pearled with the self-same shower.  
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
Meagre from its celled sleep;  
And the snake all winter-thin  
Cast on sunny bank its skin;  
Freckled nest eggs thou shalt see  
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,  
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest  
Quiet on her mossy nest;  
Then the hurry and alarm  
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;  
Acorns ripe down-pattering  
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy ! let her loose;  
Every thing is spoilt by use;  
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
Too much gazed at ? Where's the maid  
Whose lip mature is ever new ?  
Where's the eye, however blue,  
Doth not weary ? Where's the face  
One would meet in every place ?  
Where's the voice, however soft,  
One would hear so very oft ?  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.  
Let, then, winged Fancy find  
Thee a mistress to thy mind :  
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter

Ere the God of Torment taught her  
How to frown and how to chide ;  
With a waist and with a side  
White as Hebe's, when her zone  
Slipt its golden clasp, and down  
Fell her kirtle to her feet,  
While she held the goblet sweet,  
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh  
Of the Fancy's silken leash ;  
Quickly break her prison-string,  
And such joys as these she'll bring.—  
Let the winged Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home.

## ODE.

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Have ye souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new ?  
Yes, and those of heaven commune  
With the spheres of sun and moon ;  
With the noise of fountains wondrous,  
And the parle of voices thund'rous ;  
With the whisper of heaven's trees  
And one another, in soft ease  
Seated on Elysian lawns  
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns ;  
Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
Where the daises are rose-scented,  
And the rose herself has got  
Perfume which on earth is not ;  
Where the nightingale doth sing  
Not a senseless, tranced thing,  
But divine melodious truth ;  
Philosophic numbers smooth ;  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again ;  
And the souls ye left behind you  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,  
Never slumber'd, never cloying.  
Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week ;  
Of their sorrows and delights ;  
Of their passions and their spites ;  
Of their glory and their shame ;  
What doth strengthen and what maim.  
Thus ye teach us, every day,  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new !

## TO AUTUMN.

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness !

Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-  
eaves run ;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel  
shells

With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease.  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy  
cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy  
hook

Spare the next swath and all its twined  
flowers ;

And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;  
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by  
hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are  
they ?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;  
Hedge-crickets sing ; and now with treble soft  
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft.  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

## ODE ON MELANCHOLY.

No, no ! go not to Lethe, neither twist  
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous  
wine ;  
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine ;  
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,  
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be  
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl  
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries ;  
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,  
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,  
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
And hides the green hill in an April shroud ;  
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,  
Or on the wealth of globed peonies ;  
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,  
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.



She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die ;  
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
Bidding adieu ; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips :  
Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
Though seen of none save him whose stren-  
uous tongue  
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine ;  
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,  
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

## LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN

SOULS of poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison? O generous food!  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood  
Would, with his maid Marian,  
Sup and bouse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quilt  
To a sheepskin gave the story,—  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new old-sign  
Sipping beverage divine,

And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

## ROBIN HOOD.

### TO A FRIEND.

No ! those days are gone away,  
And their hours are old and gray,  
And their minutes buried all  
Under the down-trodden pall  
Of the leaves of many years :  
Many times have Winter's shears,  
Frozen North, and chilling East,  
Sounded tempests to the least  
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,  
Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,  
And the twanging bow no more ;  
Silent is the ivory shrill  
Past the heath and up the hill ;  
There is no mid-forest laugh,  
Where lone Echo gives the half  
To some wight, amazed to hear  
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June  
You may go, with sun or moon,

Or the seven stars to light you,  
Or the polar ray to right you ;  
But you never may behold  
Little John, or Robin bold ;  
Never one, of all the clan,  
Thrumming on an empty can,  
Some old hunting ditty, while  
He doth his green way beguile  
To fair hostess Merriment,  
Down beside the pasture Trent ;  
For he left the merry tale,  
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din ;  
Gone, the song of Gamelyn ;  
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
Idling in the "greené shawe ;"  
All are gone away and past !  
And if Robin should be cast  
Sudden from his tufted grave,  
And if Marian should have  
Once again her forest days,  
She would weep, and he would craze :  
He would swear, for all his oaks,  
Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,  
Have rotted on the briny seas ;  
She would weep that her wild bees  
Sang not to her—strange ! that honey  
Can't be got without hard money !

So it is ; yet let us sing  
Honour to the old bow-string !  
Honour to the bugle horn !  
Honour to the woods unshorn !  
Honour to the Lincoln green !  
Honour to the archer keen !  
Honour to tight Little John,  
And the horse he rode upon !  
Honour to bold Robin Hood,  
Sleeping in the underwood !  
Honour to Maid Marian,  
And to all the Sherwood clan !  
Though their days have hurried by,  
Let us two a burden try.

## SLEEP AND POETRY.

As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete  
Was unto me, but why that I ne might  
Rest I ne wist, for there n' as erthly wight  
(As I suppose) had more of hertis ese  
Than I, for I n' ad sicknesse nor disese.—CHAUCER.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in summer?  
What is more soothing than the pretty hummer  
That stays one moment in an open flower,  
And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?  
What is more tranquil than a musk-rose blowing  
In a green island, far from all men's knowing?  
More healthful than the leafiness of dales?  
More secret than a nest of nightingales?  
More serene than Cordelia's countenance?  
More full of visions than a high romance?  
What, but thee, Sleep? Soft closer of our eyes!  
Low murmurer of tender lullabies!  
Light hoverer around our happy pillows!  
Wreather of poppy buds, and weeping willows!  
Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!  
Most happy listener! when the morning blesses  
Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes  
That glance so brightly at the new sun-rise.

But what is higher beyond thought than thee  
Fresher than berries of a mountain-tree ?  
More strange, more beautiful, more smooth, more  
regal,  
Than wings of swans, than doves, than dim-seen  
eagle ?

What is it ? And to what shall I compare it ?  
It has a glory, and nought else can share it :  
The thought thereof is awful, sweet, and holy,  
Chasing away all worldliness and folly :  
Coming sometimes like fearful claps of thunder ;  
Or the low rumblings earth's regions under ;  
And sometimes like a gentle whispering  
Of all the secrets of some wondrous thing  
That breathes about us in the vacant air ;  
So that we look around with prying stare,  
Perhaps to see shapes of light, aerial limning ;  
And catch soft floatings from a faint-heard  
hymning ;  
To see the laurel-wreath, on high suspended,  
[That is to crown our name when life is ended.  
Sometimes it gives a glory to the voice,  
And from the heart up-springs, rejoice ! rejoice !  
Sounds which will reach the Framer of all things,  
And die away in ardent mutterings.

No one who once the glorious sun has seen,  
And all the clouds, and felt his bosom clean  
For his great Maker's presence, but must know  
What 'tis I mean, and feel his being glow :



Therefore no insult will I give his spirit,  
By telling what he sees from native merit.

O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen,  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven—should I rather kneel  
Upon some mountain-top until I feel  
A glowing splendour round about me hung,  
And echo back the voice of thine own tongue?  
O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen,  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent prayer,  
Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air,  
Smooth'd for intoxication by the breath  
Of flowering bays, that I may die a death  
Of luxury, and my young spirit follow  
The morning sunbeams to the great Apollo.  
Like a fresh sacrifice ; or, if I can bear  
The o'erwhelming sweets, 'twill bring me to the  
fair

Visions of all places : a bowery nook  
Will be elysium—an eternal book  
Whence I may copy many a lovely saying  
About the leaves, and flowers—about the playing  
Of nymphs in woods, and fountains ; and the shad !  
Keeping a silence round a sleeping maid ;  
And many a verse from so strange influence  
That we must ever wonder how, and whence  
It came. Also imaginings will hover  
Round my fire-side, and haply there discover

Vistas of solemn beauty, where I'd wander  
In happy silence, like the clear Meander  
Through its lone vales; and where I found a spot  
Of awfuller shade, or an enchanted grot,  
Or a green hill o'erspread with chequer'd dress  
Of flowers, and fearful from its loveliness,  
Write on my tablets all that was permitted,  
All that was for our human senses fitted.  
Then the events of this wide world I'd seize  
Like a strong giant, and my spirit tease  
Till at its shoulders it should proudly see  
Wings to find out an immortality.

Stop and consider ! life is but a day ;  
A fragile dewdrop on its perilous way  
From a tree's summit ; a poor Indian's sleep  
While his boat hastens to the monstrous steep  
Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan ?  
Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown ;  
The reading of an ever-changing tale ;  
The light uplifting of a maiden's veil ;  
A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air ;  
A laughing school-boy, without grief or care,  
Riding the springy branches of an elm.

O for ten years, that I may overwhelm  
Myself in poesy ! so I may do the deed  
That my own soul has to itself decreed.  
Then I will pass the countries that I see  
In long perspective, and continually

Taste their pure fountains. First the realm I'll  
pass

Of Flora, and Old Pan : sleep in the grass,  
Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,  
And choose each pleasure that my fancy sees,  
Catch the white-handed nymphs in shady  
places,

To woo sweet kisses from averted faces—  
Play with their fingers, touch their shoulders  
white

Into a pretty shrinking with a bite  
As hard as lips can make it: till agreed,  
A lovely tale of human life we'll read.  
And one will teach a tame dove how it best  
May fan the cool air gently o'er my rest :  
Another, bending o'er her nimble tread,  
Will set a green robe floating round her head,  
And still will dance with ever-varied ease,  
Smiling upon the flowers and the trees :  
Another will entice me on, and on,  
Through almond blossoms and rich cinnamon ;  
Till in the bosom of a leafy world  
We rest in silence, like two gems upcurl'd  
In the recesses of a pearly shell.

And can I ever bid these joys farewell ?  
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,  
Where I may find the agonies, the strife  
Of human hearts : for lo ! I see afar,  
O'er-sailing the blue cragginess, a car

And steeds with streamy manes—the charioteer  
Looks out upon the winds with glorious fear:  
And now the numerous trappings quiver lightly  
Along a huge cloud's ridge; and now with  
sprightly

Wheel downward come they into fresher skies,  
Tipt round with silver from the sun's bright eyes.  
Still downward with capacious whirl they glide;  
And now I see them on a green-hill side  
In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.  
The charioteer with wondrous gesture talks  
To the trees and mountains; and there soon  
appear

Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear.  
Passing along before a dusky space  
Made by some mighty oaks: as they would chase  
Some ever-fleeting music, on they sweep.  
Lo! how they murmur, laugh, and smile, and  
weep:

Some with upholden hand and mouth severe;  
Some with their faces muffled to the ear  
Between their arms; some clear in youthful  
bloom,

Go glad and smilingly athwart the gloom;  
Some looking back, and some with upward gaze;  
Yes, thousands in a thousand different ways  
Flit onward—now a lovely wreath of girls  
Dancing their sleek hair into tangled curls;  
And now broad wings. Most awfully intent  
The driver of those steeds is forward bent,

And seems to listen : O that I might know  
All that he writes with such a hurrying glow !

The visions all are fled—the car is fled  
Into the light of heaven, and in their stead  
A sense of real things comes doubly strong,  
And, like a muddy stream, would bear along  
My soul to nothingness : but I will strive  
Against all doubtings, and will keep alive  
The thought of that same chariot, and the strange  
Journey it went.

Is there so small a range  
In the present strength of manhood, that the high  
Imagination cannot freely fly  
As she was wont of old ? prepare her steeds,  
Paw up against the light, and do strange deeds  
Upon the clouds ? Has she not shown us all ?  
From the clear space of ether, to the small  
Breath of new buds unfolding ? From the  
meaning  
Of Jove's large eyebrow, to the tender greening  
Of April meadows ? here her altar shone,  
E'en in this isle ; and who could paragon  
The fervid choir that lifted up a noise  
Of harmony, to where it aye will poise  
Its mighty self of convoluting sound,  
Huge as a planet, and like that roll round,  
Eternally around a dizzy void ?  
Ay, in those days the Muses were nigh cloy'd

With honours ; nor had any other care  
Than to sing out and soothe their wavy hair.

Could all this be forgotten ? Yes, a schism  
Nurtured by foppery and barbarism,  
Made great Apollo blush for this his land.  
Men were thought wise who could not under  
stand

His glories : with a puling infant's force  
They sway'd about upon a rocking-horse,  
And thought it Pegasus. Ah, dismal-soul'd !  
The winds of heaven blew, the ocean roll'd  
Its gathering waves—ye felt it not. The blue  
Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew  
Of summer night collected still to make  
The morning precious : Beauty was awake !  
Why were ye not awake ? But ye were dead  
To things ye knew not of,—were closely wed  
To musty laws lined out with wretched rule  
And compass vile : so that ye taught a school  
Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and fit,  
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,  
Their verses tallied. Easy was the task ;  
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask  
Of Poesy. Ill-fated, impious race !  
That blasphemed the bright Lyrist to his face,  
And did not know it,—no, they went about,  
Holding a poor, decrepit standard out,  
Mark'd with most flimsy mottoes, and in large  
The name of one Boileau !

O ye whose charge

It is to hover round our pleasant hills !  
Whose congregated majesty so fills  
My boundly reverence, that I cannot trace  
Your hallow'd names, in this unholy place,  
So near those common folk ; did not their shames  
Affright you ? Did our old lamenting Thames  
Delight you ? did ye never cluster round  
Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,  
And weep ? Or did ye wholly bid adieu  
To regions where no more the laurel grew ?  
Or did ye stay to give a welcoming  
To some lone spirits who could proudly sing  
Their youth away, and die ? 'Twas even so :  
But let me think away those times of woe :  
Now 'tis a fairer season ; ye have breathed  
Rich benedictions o'er us ; ye have wreathed  
Fresh garlands : for sweet music has been heard  
In many places ; some has been upstirr'd  
From out its crystal dwelling in a lake,  
By a swan's ebon bill ; from a thick brake,  
Nested and quiet in a valley mild,  
Bubbles a pipe ; fine sounds are floating wild  
About the earth : happy are ye and glad.  
These things are, doubtless : yet in truth we've  
had

Strange thunders from the potency of song :  
Mingled indeed with what is sweet and strong,  
From majesty : but in clear truth the themes  
Are ugly cubs, the Poet's Polyphemes

Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless shower  
Of light is poesy ; 'tis the supreme of power ;  
'Tis might half slumbering on its own right arm.  
The very archings of her eyelids charm  
A thousand willing agents to obey,  
And still she governs with the mildest sway :  
But strength alone though of the Muses born  
Is like a fallen angel : trees upturn,  
Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and sepul-  
chres

Delight it ; for it feeds upon the burrs  
And thorns of life ; forgetting the great end  
Of poesy, that it should be a friend  
To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man.

Yet I rejoice : a myrtle fairer than  
E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter weeds  
Lifts its sweet heap into the air, and feeds  
A silent space with ever-sprouting green.  
All tenderest birds there find a pleasant screen,  
Creep through the shade with jaeanty fluttering,  
Nibble the little cupped flowers and sing.  
Then let us clear away the choking thorns  
From round its gentle stem ; let the young fawns  
Yeamed in after-times, when we are flown,  
Find a fresh sward beneath it, overgrown  
With simple flowers : let there nothing be  
More boisterous than a lover's bended knee ;  
Nought more ungentle than the placid look  
Of one who leans upon a closed book ;



Nought more untranquil than the grassy slopes  
Between two hills. All hail, delightful hopes !  
As she was wont, th' imagination  
Into most lovely labyrinths will be gone,  
And they shall be accounted poet kings  
Who simply tell the most heart-easing things.  
O may these joys be ripe before I die !

Will not some say that I presumptuously  
Have spoken ? that from hastening disgrace  
'Twere better far to hide my foolish face ?  
That whining boyhood should with reverence  
bow

Ere the dread thunderbolt could reach me ?  
How !

If I do hide myself, it sure shall be  
In the very fane, the light of Poesy :  
If I do fall, at least I will be laid  
Beneath the silence of a poplar shade ;  
And over me the grass shall be smooth shaven ;  
And there shall be a kind memorial graven.  
But off, Despondence ! miserable bane !  
They should not know thee, who athirst to gain  
A noble end, are thirsty every hour.  
What though I am not wealthy in the dower  
Of spanning wisdom ; though I do not know  
The shiftings of the mighty winds that blow  
Hither and thither all the changing thoughts  
Of man : though no great ministering reason  
sorts

Out the dark mysteries of human souls  
To clear conceiving : yet there ever rolls  
A vast idea before me, and I glean  
Therefrom my liberty : thence too I've seen  
The end and aim of Poesy. 'Tis clear  
As anything most true ; as that the year  
Is made of the four seasons—manifest  
As a large cross, some old cathedral's crest,  
Lifted to the white clouds. Therefore should I  
Be but the essence of deformity,  
A coward, did my very eyelids wink  
At speaking out what I have dared to think.  
Ah ! rather let me like a madman run  
Over some precipice ; let the hot sun  
Melt my Dedalian wings, and drive me down  
Convulsed and headlong ? Stay ! an inward frown  
Of conscience bids me be more calm awhile.  
An ocean dim, sprinkled with many an isle,  
Spreads awfully before me. How much toil !  
How many days ! what desperate turmoil !  
Ere I can have explored its widenesses.  
Ah, what a task ! upon my bended knees,  
I could unsay those—no, impossible !  
Impossible !

For sweet relief I'll dwell  
On humbler thoughts, and let this strange assay  
Begun in gentleness die so away.  
E'en now all tumult from my bosom fades :  
I turn full-hearted to the friendly aids

That smooth the path of honour : brotherhood,  
And friendliness, the nurse of mutual good.  
The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant sonnet  
Into the brain ere one can think upon it ;  
The silence when some rhymes are coming out ;  
And when they're come, the very pleasant rout .  
The message certain to be done to-morrow.  
'Tis perhaps as well that it should be to borrow  
Some precious book from out its snug retreat,  
To cluster round it when we next shall meet.  
Scarce can I scribble on ; for lovely airs  
Are fluttering round the room like doves in  
pairs ;

Many delights of that glad day recalling,  
When first my senses caught their tender falling  
And with these airs come forms of elegance  
Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's prance,  
Careless, and grand—fingers soft and round  
Parting luxuriant curls ; and the swift bound  
Of Bacchus from his chariot, when his eye  
Made Ariadne's cheek look blushinglly,  
Thus I remember all the pleasant flow  
Of words at opening a portfolio.

Things such as these are ever harbingers  
To trains of peaceful images : the stirr  
Of a swan's neck unseen among the rushes :  
A linnet starting all about the bushes :  
A butterfly, with golden wings broad-parted,  
Nestling a rose, convulsed as though it smarted

With over-pleasure—many, many more,  
Might I indulge at large in all my store  
Of luxuries: yet I must not forget  
Sleep, quiet with his poppy coronet:  
For what there may be worthy in these  
rhymes

I partly owe to him: and thus, the chimes  
Of friendly voices had just given place  
To as sweet a silence, when I 'gan retrace  
The pleasant day, upon a couch at ease.  
It was a poet's house who keeps the keys  
Of pleasure's temple—round about were hung  
The glorious features of the bards who sung  
In other ages—cold and sacred busts  
Smiled at each other. Happy he who trusts  
To clear Futurity his darling fame!  
Then there were fauns and satyrs taking aim  
At swelling apples with a frisky leap  
And reaching fingers, 'mid a luscious heap  
Of vine-leaves. Then there rose to view a  
lane

Of liney marble, and thereto a train  
Of nymphs approaching fairly o'er the sward:  
One, loveliest, holding her white hand toward  
The dazzling sun-rise: two sisters sweet  
Bending their graceful figures till they meet  
Over the trippings of a little child:  
And some are hearing, eagerly, the wild  
Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.  
See, in another picture, nymphs are wiping

Cherishingly Diana's timorous limbs;  
A fold of lawny mantle dabbling swims  
At the bath's edge, and keeps a gentle motion  
With the subsiding crystal: as when ocean  
Heaves calmly its broad swelling smoothness o'er  
Its rocky marge, and balances once more  
The patient weeds; that now unshent by foam  
Feel all about their undulating home.  
Sappho's meek head was there half smiling  
down

At nothing; just as though the earnest frown  
Of over-thinking had that moment gone  
From off her brow, and left her all alone.

Great Alfred's too, with anxious, pitying eyes,  
As if he always listen'd to the sighs  
Of the goaded world; and Kosciusko's, worn  
By horrid suffrance—mightily forlorn.

Petrarch, outstepping from the shady green,  
Starts at the sight of Laura; nor can wean  
His eyes from her sweet face. Most happy  
they!

For over them was seen a free display  
Of outspread wings, and from between them shone  
The face of Poesy: from off her throne  
She overlook'd things that I scarce could tell,  
The very sense of where I was might well  
Keep sleep aloof: but more than that there came  
Thought after thought to nourish up the flame

Within my breast ; so that the morning light  
Surprised me even from a sleepless night ;  
And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,  
Resolving to begin that very day  
These lines ; and howsoever they be done,  
I leave them as a father does his son.

## STANZAS.

In a drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy tree,  
Thy branches ne'er remember  
Their green felicity :  
The north cannot undo them,  
With a sleety whistle through them ;  
Nor frozen thawings glue them  
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy brook,  
Thy bubblings ne'er remember  
Apollo's summer look ;  
But with a sweet forgetting,  
They stay their crystal fretting,  
Never, never petting  
About the frozen time.

Ah ! would 'twere so with many  
A gentle girl and boy !  
But were there ever any  
Writhed not at passed joy ?

To know the change and feel it,  
When there is none to heal it,  
Nor numbed sense to steal it,  
Was never said in rhyme.



## EPISTLES.

Among the rest a shepherd (though but young  
Yet hartned to his pipe) with all the skill  
His few yeeres could, began to fill his quill.

*Britannia's Pastorals.*—BROWNE.



## EPISTLES.

TO GEORGE FELTON MATHEW.

SWEET are the pleasures that to verse belong,  
And doubly sweet a brotherhood in song ;  
Nor can remembrance, Mathew ! bring to view  
A fate more pleasing, a delight more true  
Than that in which the brother poets joy'd,  
Who, with combined powers, their wit employ'd  
To raise a trophy to the drama's muses.  
The thought of this great partnership diffuses  
Over the genius-loving heart, a feeling  
Of all that's high, and great, and good, and  
healing.

Too partial friend ! fain would I follow thee  
Past each horizon of fine poesy ;  
Fain would I echo back each pleasant note  
As o'er Sicilian seas, clear anthems float  
'Mong the light skimming gondolas far parted,  
Just when the sun his farewell beam has darted  
But 'tis impossible ; far different cares  
Beckon me sternly from soft " Lydian airs,"

And hold my faculties so long in thrall,  
That I am oft in doubt whether at all  
I shall again see Phœbus in the morning :  
Or flush'd Aurora in the roseate dawning !  
Or a white Naiad in a rippling stream ;  
Or a wrapt seraph in a moonlight beam ;  
Or again witness what with thee I've seen,  
The dew by fairy feet swept from the green,  
After a night of some quaint jubilee  
Which every elf and fay had come to see :  
When bright processions took their airy march  
Beneath the curv'd moon's triumphal arch.

But might I now each passing moment give  
To the coy Muse, with me she would not live  
In this dark city, nor would condescend  
Mid contradictions her delights to lend.  
Should e'er the fine-eyed maid to me be kind,  
Ah ! surely it must be whene'er I find  
Some flowery spot, sequester'd, wild, romantic,  
That often must have seen a poet frantic ;  
Where oaks, that erst the Druid knew, are growing,  
And flowers, the glory of one day, are blowing ;  
Where the dark-leaved laburnum's drooping  
clusters  
Reflect athwart the stream their yellow lustres,  
And intertwined the cassia's arms unite,  
With its own drooping buds, but very white.  
Where on one side are covert branches hung,  
Among which the nightingales have always sung

In leafy quiet ; where to pry, aloof  
 Atween the pillars of the sylvan roof,  
 Would be to find where violet beds were nest-  
     ling,  
 And where the bee with cowslip bells was  
     wrestling.

There must be too a ruin dark and gloomy,  
 To say "Joy not too much in all that's bloomy."

Yet this is vain—O Mathew ! lend thy aid  
 To find a place where I may greet the maid—  
 Where we may soft humanity put on,  
 And sit, and rhyme, and think on Chatterton ;  
 And that warm-hearted Shakspeare sent to meet  
     him  
 Four laurell'd spirits, heavenward to entreat him.  
 With reverence would we speak of all the sages  
 Who have left streaks of light athwart their  
     ages :

And thou shouldst moralize on Milton's blind-  
     ness,

And mourn the fearful dearth of human kindness  
 To those who strove with the bright golden wing  
 Of genius, to flap away each sting

Thrown by the pitiless world. We next could  
     tell

Of those who in the cause of freedom fell ;  
 Of our own Alfred, of Helvetian Tell ;  
 Of him whose name to every heart's a solace,  
 High-minded and unbending William Wallace.

While to the rugged north our musing turns,  
We well might drop a tear for him and Burnz.  
Felton ! without incitements such as these,  
How vain for me the niggard Muse to tease !  
For thee, she will thy every dwelling grace,  
And make " a sunshine in a shady place : "  
For thou wast once a flow'ret blooming wild,  
Close to the source, bright, pure, and undeciled,  
Whence gush the streams of song : in happy hour  
Came chaste Diana from her shady bower,  
Just as the sun was from the east uprising ;  
And, as for him some gift she was devising,  
Beheld thee, pluck'd thee, cast thee in the stream  
To meet her glorious brother's greeting beam.  
I marvel much that thou hast never told  
How, from a flower, into a fish of gold  
Apollo changed thee : how thou next didst seem  
A black-eyed swan upon the widening stream ;  
And when thou first didst in that mirror trace  
The placid features of a human face ;  
That thou hast never told thy travels strange,  
And all the wonders of the mazy range  
O'er pebbly crystal, and o'er golden sands ;  
Kissing thy daily food from Naiads' pearly hands

*November, 1815.*

TO MY BROTHER GEORGE

FULL many a dreary hour have I past,  
My brain bewilder'd, and my mind o'ercast  
With heaviness; in seasons when I've thought  
No sphery strains by me could e'er be caught  
From the blue dome, though I to dimness gaze  
On the far depth where sheeted lightning plays;  
Or, on the wavy grass outstretch'd supinely,  
Pry 'mong the stars, to strive to think divinely:  
That I should never hear Apollo's song,  
Though feathery clouds were floating all along  
The purple west, and, two bright streaks between,  
The golden lyre itself were dimly seen:  
That the still murmur of the honey-bee  
Would never teach a rural song to me:  
That the bright glance from beauty's eyelids  
                  slanting  
Would never make a lay of mine enchanting,  
Or warm my breast with ardour to unfold  
Some tale of love and arms in time of old.

But there are times, when those that love the  
                  bay,  
Fly from all sorrowing far, far away;

A sudden glow comes on them, nought they see  
In water, earth, or air, but poesy.  
It has been said, dear George, and true I hold it,  
(For knightly Spenser to Libertas told it,)  
That when a Poet is in such a trance,  
In air he sees white coursers paw and prance,  
Bestriden of gay knights, in gay apparel,  
Who at each other tilt in playful quarrel ;  
And what we, ignorantly, sheet-lightning call,  
Is the swift opening of their wide portal,  
When the bright warder blows his trumpet clear,  
Whose tones reach nought on earth but poet's ear,  
When these enchanted portals open wide,  
And through the light the horsemen swiftly glide,  
The Poet's eye can reach those golden halls,  
And view the glory of their festivals :  
Their ladies fair, that in the distance seem  
Fit for the silvering of a seraph's dream ;  
Their rich brimm'd goblets, that incessant run,  
Like the bright spots that move about the sun ;  
And when upheld, the wine from each bright jar  
Pours with the lustre of a falling star.  
Yet further off are dimly seen their bowers,  
Of which no mortal eye can reach the flowers ;  
And 'tis right just, for well Apollo knows  
'Twould make the Poet quarrel with the rose.  
All that's reveal'd from that far seat of blisses,  
Is, the clear fountains' interchanging kisses,  
As gracefully descending, light and thin,  
Like silver streaks across a dolphin's fin,



When he upswimmeth from the coral caves,  
And sports with half his tail above the waves.

These wonders strange he sees, and many  
more,

Whose head is pregnant with poetic lore :  
Should he upon an evening ramble fare  
With forehead to the soothing breezes bare,  
Would he nought see but the dark, silent blue,  
With all its diamonds trembling through and  
through ?

Or the coy moon, when in the waviness  
Of whitest clouds she does her beauty dress,  
And staidly paces higher up, and higher,  
Like a sweet nun in holiday attire ?  
Ah, yes ! much more would start into his sight—  
The revelries and mysteries of night :  
And should I ever see them, I will tell you  
Such tales as needs must with amazement spell  
you

These are the living pleasures of the bard :  
But richer far posterity's award.  
What does he murmur with his latest breath,  
While his proud eye looks through the film of  
death ?  
“ What though I leave this dull and earthly mould,  
Yet shall my spirit lofty converse hold  
With after times.—The patriot shall feel  
My stern alarum, and unsheath his steel ;

Or in the senate thunder out my numbers,  
To startle princes from their easy slumbers.  
The sage will mingle with each moral theme  
My happy thoughts sententious : he will teem  
With lofty periods when my verses fire him,  
And then I'll stoop from heaven to inspire him.  
Lays have I left of such a dear delight  
That maids will sing them on their bridal-night.  
Gay villagers, upon a morn of May,  
When they have tired their gentle limbs with  
play,

And form'd a snowy circle on the grass,  
And placed in midst of all that lovely lass  
Who chosen is their queen,—with her fine head  
Crowned with flowers purple, white, and red :  
For there the lily and the musk-rose sighing,  
Are emblems true of hapless lovers dying :  
Between her breasts, that never yet felt trouble  
A bunch of violets full blown, and doable,  
Serenely sleep :—she from a casket takes  
A little book,—and then a joy awakes  
About each youthful heart,—with stifled cries,  
And rubbing of white hands, and sparkling  
eyes :

For she's to read a tale of hopes and fears ;  
One that I foster'd in my youthful years :  
The pearls, that on each glistening circlet sleep,  
Gush ever and anon with silent creep,  
Lured by the innocent dimples. To sweet rest  
Shall the dear babe, upon its mother's breast,

Be lull'd with songs of mine. Fair world adieu !  
Thy dales and hills are fading from my view :  
Swiftly I mount, upon wide-spreading pinions,  
Far from the narrow bounds of thy dominions.  
Full joy I feel, while thus I cleave the air,  
That my soft verse will charm thy daughters  
fair,

And warm thy sons !” Ah, my dear friend and  
brother,

Could I, at once, my mad ambition smother,  
For tasting joys like these, sure I should be  
Happier, and dearer to society.

At times, 'tis true, I've felt relief from pain  
When some bright thought has darted through  
my brain :

Through all that day I've felt a greater pleasure  
Than if I had brought to light a hidden treasure.  
As to my sonnets, though none else should heed  
them,

I feel delighted, still, that you should read them.  
Of late, too, I have had much calm enjoyment,  
Stretch'd on the grass at my best loved employ  
ment

Of scribbling lines for you. These things I  
thought

While, in my face, the freshest breeze I caught  
E'en now I am pillow'd on a bed of flowers  
That crowns a lofty cliff, which proudly towers  
Above the ocean waves. The stalks and blades  
Chequer my tablet with their quivering shades.

On one side is a field of drooping oats,  
Through which the poppies show their scarlet  
coats,

So pert and useless, that they bring to mind  
The scarlet coats that pester human-kind.

And on the other side, outspread, is seen  
Ocean's blue mantle, streak'd with purple and  
green ;

Now 'tis I see a canvas'd ship, and now  
Mark the bright silver curling round her prow.

I see the lark down-dropping to his nest,  
And the broad-wing'd sea-gull never at rest ;  
For when no more he spreads his feathers free,  
His breast is dancing on the restless sea.

Now I direct my eyes into the west,  
Which at this moment is in sun-beams drest :  
Why westward turn ? 'Twas but to say adieu !  
'Twas but to kiss my hand, dear George, to you !

*August, 1816.*

TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE.

OFF have you seen a swan superbly frowning,  
And with proud breast his own white shadow  
crowning;

He slants his neck beneath the waters bright  
So silently, it seems a beam of light  
Come from the galaxy: anon he sports,—  
With outspread wings the Naiad Zephyr courts,  
Or ruffles all the surface of the lake  
In striving from its crystal face to take  
Some diamond water-drops, and them to treasure  
In milky nest, and sip them off at leisure.  
But not a moment can he there ensure them,  
Nor to such downy rest can he allure them;  
For down they rush as though they would be  
free,

And drop like hours into eternity.  
Just like that bird am I in loss of time,  
Whene'er I venture on the stream of rhyme;  
With shatter'd boat, oar snapt, and canvas rent,  
I slowly sail, scarce knowing my intent;  
Still scooping up the water with my fingers,  
In which a trembling diamond never lingers.

By this, friend Charles, you may full plainly see  
Why I have never penn'd a line to thee :  
Because my thoughts were never free and clear,  
And little fit to please a classic ear ;  
Because my wine was of too poor a savour  
For one whose palate gladdens in the flavour  
Of sparkling Helicon :—small good it were  
To take him to a desert rude and bare,  
Who had on Baïæ's shore reclined at ease,  
While Tasso's page was floating in a breeze  
That gave soft music from Armida's bowers,  
Mingled with fragrance from her rarest flowers :  
Small good to one who had by Mulla's stream  
Fondled the maidens with the breasts of cream ;  
Who had beheld Belphebe in a brook,  
And lovely Una in a leafy nook,  
And Archimago leaning o'er his book :  
Who had of all that's sweet tasted, and seen,  
From silvery ripple, up to beauty's queen ;  
From the sequester'd haunts of gay Titania,  
To the blue dwelling of divine Urania :  
One, who of late had ta'en sweet forest walks  
With him who elegantly chats and talks—  
The wrong'd Libertas—who has told you stories  
Of laurel chaplets, and Apollo's glories ;  
Of troops chivalrous prancing through a city,  
And tearful ladies, made for love and pity :  
With many else which I have never known.  
Thus have I thought ; and days on days have  
flown

Slowly, or rapidly—unwilling still  
For you to try my dull, unlearned quill.  
Nor should I now, but that I've known you long ;  
That you first taught me all the sweets of song :  
The grand, the sweet, the terse, the free, the fine :  
What swell'd with pathos, and what right divine :  
Spenserian vowels that elope with ease,  
And float along like birds o'er summer seas :  
Miltonian storms, and more, Miltonian tender-  
ness :

Michael in arms, and more, meek Eve's fair slen-  
derness.

Who read for me the sonnet swelling loudly  
Up to its climax, and then dying proudly ?  
Who found for me the grandeur of the ode,  
Growing, like Atlas, stronger from its load ?  
Who let me taste that more than cordial dram,  
The sharp, the rapier-pointed epigram ?  
Show'd me that epic was of all the king,  
Round, vast, and spanning all, like Saturn's ring ?  
You too up-held the veil from Clio's beauty,  
And pointed out the patriot's stern duty ;  
The might of Alfred, and the shaft of Tell ;  
The hand of Brutus, that so grandly fell  
Upon a tyrant's head. Ah ! had I never seen,  
Or known your kindness, what might I have been ?  
What my enjoyments in my youthful years,  
Bereft of all that now my life endears ?  
And can I e'er these benefits forget ?  
And can I e'er repay the friendly debt ?

No, doubly no;—yet should these rhymings  
please,

I shall roll on the grass with twofold ease;  
For I have long time been my fancy feeding  
With hopes that you would one day think the  
reading

Of my rough verses not an hour misspent;  
Should it e'er be so, what a rich content!  
Some weeks have pass'd since last I saw the  
spires

In lucent Thames reflected:—warm desires  
To see the sun o'er-peep the eastern dimness,  
And morning-shadows streaking into slimmess  
Across the lawnly fields, and pebbly water;  
To mark the time as they grow broad and  
shorter;

To feel the air that plays about the hills,  
And sips its freshness from the little rills;  
To see high, golden corn wave in the light  
When Cynthia smiles upon a summer's night,  
And peers among the cloudlets, jet and white,  
As though she were reclining in a bed  
Of bean-blossoms, in heaven freshly shed  
No sooner had I stepp'd into these pleasures,  
Than I began to think of rhymes and mea-  
sures;

The air that floated by me seem'd to say  
‘Write! thou wilt never have a better day.’  
And so I did. When many lines I'd written,  
Though with their grace I was not oversmitten,



Yet, as my hand was warm, I thought I'd better  
Trust to my feelings, and write you a letter.  
Such an attempt required an inspiration  
Of a peculiar sort,—a consummation ;—  
Which, had I felt, these scribblings might have  
been

Verses from which the soul would never ween ;  
But many days have past since last my heart  
Was warm'd luxuriously by divine Mozart ;  
By Arne delighted, or by Handel madden'd ;  
Or by the song of Erin pierced and sadden'd :  
What time you were before the music sitting,  
And the rich notes to each sensation fitting.  
Since I have walk'd with you through shady  
lanes

That freshly terminate in open plains,  
And revell'd in a chat that ceased not,  
When, at night-fall, among your books we got :  
No, nor when supper came, nor after that,—  
Nor when reluctantly I took my hat ;  
No, nor till cordially you shook my hand  
Mid-way between our homes :—your accents  
bland

Still sounded in my ears, when I no more  
Could hear your footsteps touch the gravelly  
floor.

Sometimes I lost them, and then found again ;  
You changed the foot-path for the grassy plain.  
In those still moments I have wish'd you joys  
That well you know to honour :—" Life's very toys

With him," said I, "will take a pleasant charm;  
It cannot be that aught will work him harm."

These thoughts now come o'er me with all their  
might:—

Again I shake your hand,—friend Charles, good  
night.

*September, 1816.*

SONNETS.



## SONNETS

### I.

TO A FRIEND WHO SENT ME SOME ROSES.

As late I rambled in the happy fields,  
What time the skylark shakes the tremulous  
dew  
From his lush clover covert;—when anew  
Adventurous knights take up their dinted shields;  
I saw the sweetest flower wild nature yields,  
A fresh-blown musk-rose; 'twas the first that  
threw  
Its sweets upon the summer: graceful it grew  
As is the wand that queen Titania wields.  
And, as I feasted on its fragrancy,  
I thought the garden-rose it far excell'd;  
But when, O Wells! thy roses came to me,  
My sense with their deliciousness was spell'd:  
Soft voices had they, that with tender plea  
Whisper'd of peace, and truth, and friendliness  
unquell'd.

## II.

## TO MY BROTHER GEORGE.

MANY the wonders I this day have seen :

The sun, when first he kist away the tears

That fill'd the eyes of Morn ;—the laurell'd  
peers

Who from the feathery gold of evening lean ;—

The Ocean with its vastness, its blue green,

Its ships, its rocks, its cays, its hopes, its  
fears,—

Its voice mysterious, which whoso hears

Must think on what will be, and what has been.

Even now, dear George, while this for you I write,

Cynthia is from her silken curtains peeping  
So scanty, that it seems her bridal night,

And she her half-discover'd revels keeping  
But what, without the social thought of thee,  
Would be the wonders of the sky and sea ?

## III.

TO ———.

HAD I a man's fair form, then might my sighs  
Be echoed swiftly through that ivory shell  
Thine ear, and find thy gentle heart; so well  
Would passion arm me for the enterprise:  
But ah! I am no knight whose foeman dies;  
No cuirass glistens on my bosom's swell;  
I am no happy shepherd of the dell  
Whose lips have trembled with a maiden's eyes.  
Yet must I doat upon thee,—call thee sweet,  
Sweeter by far than Hybla's honey'd roses  
When steep'd in dew rich to intoxication.  
Ah! I will taste that dew, for me 'tis meet,  
And when the moon her pallid face discloses,  
I'll gather some by spells, and incantation.

## IV.

O SOLITUDE ! if I must with thee dwell

Let it not be among the jumbled heap

Of murky buildings : climb with me the steep, —

Nature's observatory—whence the dell,

In flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,

May seem a span ; let me thy vigils keep

'Mongst boughs pavilion'd, where the deer's  
swift leap

Startles the wild bee from the foxglove bell.

But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with  
thee,

Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,

Whose words are images of thoughts refined,

Is my soul's pleasure ; and it sure must be

Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,

When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.



## V.

How many bards gild the lapses of time !  
A few of them have ever been the food  
Of my delighted fancy,—I could brood  
Over their beauties, earthly, or sublime :  
And often, when I sit me down to rhyme,  
These will in throngs before my mind intrude .  
But no confusion, no disturbance rude  
Do they occasion ; 'tis a pleasing chime.  
So the unnumber'd sounds that evening store ;  
The songs of birds—the whispering of the  
leaves—  
The voice of waters—the great bell that heaves  
With solemn sound,—and thousand others  
more,  
That distance of recognizance bereaves,  
Make pleasing music, and not wild uproar.

## VI.

TO G. A. W.

NYMPH of the downward smile and sidelong  
glance!

In what diviner moments of the day  
Art thou most lovely? when gone far astray  
Into the labyrinth of sweet utterance?  
Or when serenely wandering in a trance  
Of sober thought? Or when starting away,  
With careless robe to meet the morning ray,  
Thou sparest the flowers in thy mazy dance?  
Haply 'tis when thy ruby lips part sweetly,  
And so remain, because thou listenest:  
But thou to please wert nurtured so completely  
That I can never tell what mood is best,  
I shall as soon pronounce which Grace more  
neatly  
Trips it before Apollo than the rest.

## VII.

WRITTEN ON THE DAY THAT MR. LEIGH HUNT  
LEFT PRISON.

WHAT though, for showing truth to flatter'd state,  
Kind Hunt was shut in prison, yet has he,  
In his immortal spirit, been as free  
As the sky-searching lark, and as elate.  
Minion of grandeur! think you he did wait?  
Think you he nought but prison-walls did see,  
Till, so unwilling, thou unturn'dst the key?  
Ah, no! far happier, nobler was his fate!  
In Spenser's halls he stray'd, and bowers fair,  
Culling enchanted flowers; and he flew  
With daring Milton through the fields of air:  
To regions of his own his genius true  
Took happy flights. Who shall his fame impair  
When thou art dead, and all thy wretched crew?

## VIII.

## TO MY BROTHER.

SMALL, busy flames play through the fresh-laid  
coals,

And their faint cracklings o'er our silence creep

Like whispers of the household gods that keep

A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.

And while, for rhymes, I search around the poles,

Your eyes are fix'd, as in poetic sleep,

Upon the lore so voluble and deep,

That aye at fall of night our care condoles.

This is your birth-day, Tom, and I rejoice

That thus it passes smoothly, quietly :

Many such eves of gently whispering noise

May we together pass, and calmly try

What are this world's true joys,—ere the great

Voice

From its fair face shall bid our spirits fly.

## IX.

## ADDRESSED TO HAYDON.

HIGH-MINDEDNESS, a jealousy for good,  
A loving-kindness for the great man's fame,  
Dwells here and there with people of no name,  
In noisome alley, and in pathless wood:  
And where we think the truth least understood,  
Oft may be found a "singleness of aim,"  
That ought to frighten into hooded shame  
A money-mongering, pitiable brood.  
How glorious this affection for the cause  
Of steadfast genius, toiling gallantly!  
What when a stout unbending champion awes  
Envy, and malice to their native sty?  
Unnumber'd souls breathe out a still applause,  
Proud to behold him in his country's eye.



## ADDRESSED TO THE SAME.

GREAT spirits now on earth are sojourning:  
He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,  
Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing:  
He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake:  
And lo! whose steadfastness would never take  
A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering,  
And other spirits there are standing apart  
Upon the forehead of the age to come;  
These, these will give the world another heart,  
And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
Of mighty workings?—  
Listen awhile, ye nations, and be dumb.

## XI.

## ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold.  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne :  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
'Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold .  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken ;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.



## ON LEAVING SOME FRIENDS AT AN EARLY HOUR

Give me a golden pen, and let me lean  
On heap'd-up flowers, in regions clear, and far ;  
Bring me a tablet whiter than a star,  
Or hand of hymning angel, when 'tis seen  
The silver strings of heavenly harp atween :  
And let there glide by many a pearly car,  
Pink robes, and wavy hair, and diamond jar,  
And half-discover'd wings, and glances keen.  
The while let music wander round my ears,  
And as it reaches each delicious ending,  
Let me write down a line of glorious tone,  
And full of many wonders of the spheres :  
For what a height my spirit is contending !  
'Tis not content so soon to be alone.



## XIII

KEEN fitful gusts are whispering here and there  
Among the bushes, half leafless and dry ;  
The stars look very cold about the sky,  
And I have many miles on foot to fare ;  
Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,  
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,  
Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,  
Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair :  
For I am brimful of the friendliness  
That in a little cottage I have found ;  
Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,  
And all his love for gentle Lycid' drown'd ;  
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,  
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

## XIV.

To one who has been long in city pent,  
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair  
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer  
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.  
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,  
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair  
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair  
And gentle tale of love and languishment?  
Returning home at evening, with an ear  
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye  
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,  
He mourns that day so soon has glided by  
Even like the passage of an angel's tear  
That falls through the clear ether silently.

## XV.

## ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.

THE poetry of earth is never dead :

When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,  
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead ;  
That is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead

In summer luxury,—he has never done  
With his delights, for when tired out with fun,  
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never :

On a lone winter evening, when the frost  
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there  
shrills

The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,  
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,  
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

## XVI.

## TO KOSCIUSKO.

GOOD Kosciusko ! thy great name alone  
Is a full harvest whence to reap high feeling ;  
It comes upon us like the glorious pealing  
Of the wide spheres—an everlasting tone.  
And now it tells me, that in worlds unknown,  
The names of heroes, burst from clouds concealing,  
Are changed to harmonies, for ever stealing  
Through cloudless blue, and round each silver throne.  
It tells me too, that on a happy day,  
When some good spirit walks upon the earth,  
Thy name with Alfred's, and the great of yore,  
Gently commingling, gives tremendous birth  
To a loud hymn, that sounds far, far away  
To where the great God lives for evermore.

## XVII.

HAPPY is England ! I could be content  
To see no other verdure than its own ;  
To feel no other breezes than are blown  
Through its tall woods with high romances blent ;  
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment  
For skies Italian, and an inward groan  
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,  
And half forget what world or worldling meant.  
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters ;  
Enough their simple loveliness for me,  
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging :  
Yet do I often warmly burn to see  
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,  
And float with them about the summer waters.

## XVIII.

## THE HUMAN SEASONS.

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year ;  
There are four seasons in the mind of man :  
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear  
Takes in all beauty with an easy span :  
He has his Summer, when luxuriously  
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought he  
loves  
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high  
Is nearest unto heaven : quiet coves  
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings  
He furleth close ; contented so to look  
On mists in idleness—to let fair things  
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.  
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature.  
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

## XIX.

## ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER.

COME hither, all sweet maidens soberly,  
Down-looking aye, and with a chasten'd light,  
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,  
And meekly let your fair hands joined be,  
As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
Untouch'd, a victim of your beauty bright,  
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,  
Sinking bewilder'd 'mid the dreary sea :  
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death ;  
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary lips  
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her smile.  
O horrid dream ! see how his body dips  
Dead-heavy ; arms and shoulders gleam awhile :  
He's gone ; up bubbles all his amorous breath !



## TO AILSA ROCK.

HEARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid !

Give answer from thy voice, the sea-fowl's  
screams !

When were thy shoulders mantled in huge  
streams !

When, from the sun, was thy broad forehead hid ?

How long is't since the mighty power bid

Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom dreams ?

Sleep in the lap of thunder or sun-beams,

Or when gray clouds are thy cold cover-lid ?

Thou answer'st not, for thou art dead asleep !

Thy life is but two dead eternities—

The last in air, the former in the deep ;

First with the whales, last with the eagle-  
skies—

Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake made thee  
steep,

Another cannot wake thy giant size.



## XXI.

## ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES.

MY spirit is too weak ; mortality  
 Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,  
 And each imagined pinnacle and steep  
 Of godlike hardship tells me I must die  
 Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.  
 Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep,  
 That I have not the cloudy winds to keep  
 Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.  
 Such dim-conceived glories of the brain,  
 Bring round the heart an indescribable feud ;  
 So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,  
 That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude  
 Wasting of old Time—with a billowy main  
 A sun, a shadow of a magnitude.

## XXII.

TO HAYDON.

(WITH THE PRECEDING SONNET.)

HAYDON! forgive me that I cannot speak  
Definitively of these mighty things ;  
Forgive me, that I have not eagle's wings,  
That what I want I know not where to seek.  
And think that I would not be over-meek,  
In rolling out upfollowed thunderings,  
Even to the steep of Heliconian springs,  
Were I of ample strength for such a freak.  
Think, too, that all these numbers should be  
thine ;  
Whose else? In this who touch thy vesture's  
hem ?  
For, when men stared at what was most divine  
With brainless idiotism and o'erwise phlegm,  
Thou hadst beheld the full Hesperian shine  
Of their star in the east, and gone to worship  
them !

## XXIII.

WRITTEN IN THE COTTAGE WHERE BURNS WAS  
BORN.

THIS mortal body of a thousand days  
Now fills, O Burns, a space in thine own room,  
Where thou didst dream alone on budded bays,  
Happy and thoughtless of thy day of doom!  
My pulse is warm with thine old Barley-bree,  
My head is light with pledging a great soul,  
My eyes are wandering, and I cannot see,  
Fancy is dead and drunken at its goal;  
Yet can I stamp my foot upon thy floor,  
Yet can I ope thy window-sash to find  
The meadow thou hast tramped o'er and o'er—  
Yet can I think of thee till thought is blind,—  
Yet can I gulp a bumper to thy name,—  
O smile among the shades, for this is fame!

## XXIV.

## TO THE NILE.

SON of the old moon-mountains African !  
Stream of the Pyramid and Crocodile !  
We call thee fruitful, and that very while  
A desert fills our seeing's inward span :  
Nurse of swart nations since the world began,  
Art thou so fruitful ? or dost thou beguile  
Those men to honour thee, who, worn with toil  
Rest them a space 'twixt Cairo and Decan ?  
O may dark fancies err ! They surely do ;  
'Tis ignorance that makes a barren waste  
Of all beyond itself. Thou dost bedew  
Green rushes like our rivers, and dost taste  
The pleasant sun-rise. Green isles hast thou too,  
And to the sea as happily dost haste.

## XXV.

ON SITTING DOWN TO READ "KING LEAR"  
ONCE AGAIN.

O golden-tongued Romance with serene lute !  
Fair plumed Syren ! Queen ! if far away !  
Leave melodizing on this wintry day,  
Shut up thine olden volume, and be mute.  
Adieu ! for once again the fierce dispute,  
Betwixt hell torment and impassioned clay,  
Must I burn through ; once more assay  
The bitter sweet of this Shaksperian fruit.  
Chief Poet ! and ye clouds of Albion,  
Begetters of our deep eternal theme,  
When I am through the old oak forest gone,  
Let me not wander in a barren dream,  
But when I am consumed with the Fire,  
Give me new Phœnix-wings to fly at my desire.

•

## XXVI.

READ me a lesson, Muse, and speak it loud  
Upon the top of Nevis, blind in mist !  
I look into the chasms, and a shroud  
Vaporous doth hide them,—just so much I wish  
Mankind do know of hell ; I look o'erhead,  
And there is sullen mist,—even so much  
Mankind can tell of heaven ; mist is spread  
Before the earth, beneath me,—even such,  
Even so vague is man's sight of himself !  
Here are the craggy stones beneath my feet,—  
Thus much I know that, a poor witless elf,  
I tread on them,—that all my eye doth meet  
Is mist and crag, not only on this height,  
But in the world of thought and mental might !

•

POSTHUMOUS POEMS





## POSTHUMOUS POEMS

### FINGAL'S CAVE.

Not Aladdin magian  
Ever such a work began ;  
Not the wizard of the Dee  
Ever such a dream could see ;  
Not St. John, in Patmos' isle,  
In the passion of his toil,  
When he saw the churches seven,  
Golden aisled, built up in heaven,  
Gazed at such a rugged wonder !—  
As I stood its roofing under,  
Lo ! I saw one sleeping there,  
On the marble cold and bare ;  
While the surges washed his feet,  
And his garments white did beat,  
Drenched about the sombre rocks ;  
On his neck his well-grown locks,  
Lifted dry above the main,  
Were upon the curl again.  
“ What is this ? and what art thou ? ”  
Whispered I, and touch'd his brow ;

What art thou? and what is this?"  
Whispered I, and strove to kiss  
The spirit's hand, to wake his eyes;  
Up he started in a trice:  
"I am Lycidas," said he,  
"Fam'd in fun'ral minstrelsy!  
This was architectur'd thus  
By the great Oceanus!—  
Here his mighty waters play  
Mellow organs all the day;  
Here, by turns, his dolphins all,  
Finny palmers, great and small,  
Come to pay devotion due,—  
Each a mouth of pearls must strew!  
Many a mortal of these days  
Dares to pass our sacred ways;  
Dares to touch, audaciously,  
This cathedral of the sea!  
I have been the pontiff-priest,  
Where the waters never rest,  
Where a fledgy sea-bird choir  
Soars for ever! Holy fire  
I have hid from mortal man;  
Proteus is my Sacristan!  
But the dulled eye of mortal  
Hath passed beyond the rocky portal;  
So for ever will I leave  
Such a taint, and soon unweave  
All the magic of the place."  
So saying, with a Spirit's glance  
He dived!

TO ———.

WHAT can I do to drive away  
Remembrance from my eyes? for they have  
    seen,  
Aye, an hour ago, my brilliant Queen!  
Touch has a memory. O say, love, say,  
What can I do to kill it and be free  
In my old liberty?  
When every fair one that I saw was fair,  
Enough to catch me in but half a snare,  
Not keep me there:  
When, howe'er poor or particolour'd things,  
My muse had wings,  
And ever ready was to take her course  
Whither I bent her force,  
Unintellectual, yet divine to me;—  
Divine, I say!—What sea-bird o'er the sea  
Is a philosopher the while he goes  
Winging along where the great water throes?

How shall I do  
To get anew  
Those moulted feathers, and so mount once  
    more

Above, above  
The reach of fluttering Love,  
And make him cower lowly while I soar?  
Shall I gulp wine? No, that is vulgarism,  
A heresy and schism,  
Foisted into the canon law of love;—  
No,—wine is only sweet to happy men;  
More dismal cares  
Seize on me unawares,—  
Where shall I learn to get my peace again?  
To banish thoughts of that most hateful land,  
Dungeoner of my friends, that wicked strand  
Where they were wreck'd and live a wrecked  
life;  
That monstrous region, whose dull rivers pour,  
Ever from their sordid urns unto the shore,  
Unown'd of any weedy-haired gods;  
Whose winds, all zephyrless, hold scourging rods,  
Ice'd in the great lakes, to afflict mankind;  
Whose rank-grown forests, frosted, black, and  
blind,  
Would fright a Dryad; whose harsh herbage'd  
meads  
Make lean and lank the starv'd ox while he feeds;  
There bad flowers have no scent, birds no sweet  
song,  
And great unerring Nature once seems wrong.

O, for some sunny spell  
To dissipate the shadows of this hell!

Say they are gone,—with the new dawning light  
Steps forth my lady bright !  
O, let me once more rest  
My soul upon that dazzling breast !  
Let once again these aching arms be placed,  
The tender gaolers of thy waist !  
And let me feel that warm breath here and there  
To spread a rapture in my very hair,—  
O, the sweetness of the pain !  
Give me those lips again !  
Enough ! Enough ! it is enough for me  
To dream of thee !

## HYMN TO APOLLO.

God of the golden bow,  
And of the golden lyre,  
And of the golden hair,  
And of the golden fire.

Charioteer

Of the patient year,  
Where—where slept thine ire  
When like a blank idiot I put on thy wreath.  
Thy laurel, thy glory,  
The light of thy story,  
Or was I a worm—too low crawling, for death?  
O Delphic Apollo!

The Thunderer grasp'd and grasp'd,  
The Thunderer frown'd and frown'd;  
The eagle's feathery mane  
For wrath became stiffen'd—the sound  
Of breeding thunder  
Went drowsily under,  
Muttering to be unbound.  
O why didst thou pity, and for a worm

Why touch thy soft lute  
Till the thunder was mute,  
Why was not I crush'd—such a pitiful germ?  
O Delphic Apollo!

The Pleiades were up,  
Watching the silent air;  
The seeds and roots in the Earth  
Were swelling for summer fare;  
The Ocean, its neighbour,  
Was at its old labour,  
When, who—who did dare  
To tie, like a madman, thy plant round his brow,  
And grin and look proudly,  
And blaspheme so loudly,  
And live for that honour, to stoop to thee now?  
O Delphic Apollo!

## LINES.

UNFELT, unheard, unseen,  
I've left my little queen,  
Her languid arms in silver slumber lying  
Ah! through their nestling touch,  
Who—who could tell how much  
There is for madness—cruel, or complying?

Those faery lids how sleek!  
Those lips how moist!—they speak,  
In ripest quiet, shadows of sweet sounds:  
Into my fancy's ear  
Melting a burden dear,  
How “Love doth know no fulness, and no bounds.”

True!—tender monitors!  
I bend unto your laws:  
This sweetest day for dalliance was born!  
So, without more ado,  
I'll feel my heaven anew,  
For all the blushing of the hasty morn.



## SONG.

### I.

HUSH, hush ! tread softly ! hush, hush, my dear !

All the house is asleep, but we know very well  
That the jealous, the jealous old bald-pate may  
hear,

Tho' you've padded his night-cap—O sweet  
Isabel !

Tho' your feet are more light than a Faery's  
feet,

Who dances on bubbles where brooklets  
meet,—

Hush, hush ! soft tiptoe ! hush, hush, my dear !

For less than a nothing the jealous can hear.

### II.

No leaf doth tremble, no ripple is there

On the river,—all's still, and the night's sleepy  
eye

Closes up, and forgets all its Lethean care,

Charm'd to death by the drone of the humming  
May-fly ;

And the moon, whether prudish or com-  
plaisant,  
Has fled to her bower, well knowing I want  
No light in the dusk, no torch in the gloom,  
But my Isabel's eyes, and her lips pulp'd with  
bloom.

## III.

Lift the latch ! ah gently ! ah tenderly—sweet !  
We are dead if that latchet gives one little  
clink !  
Well done—now those lips, and a flowery seat—  
The old man may sleep, and the planets may  
wink ;  
The shut rose shall dream of our loves and  
awake  
Full-blown, and such warmth for the morn-  
ing take,  
The stock-dove shall hatch his soft twin-eggs and  
coo,  
While I kiss to the melody, aching all through !

### FAERY SONG.

SHED no tear ! O shed no tear !  
The flower will bloom another year.  
Weep no more ! O weep no more !  
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.  
Dry your eyes ! O dry your eyes !  
For I was taught in Paradise  
To ease my breast of melodies—  
Shed no tear.

Overhead ! look overhead !  
'Mong the blossoms white and red—  
Look up, look up. I flutter now  
On this fresh pomegranate bough.  
See me ! 'tis this silvery bill  
Ever cures the good man's ill.  
Shed no tear ! O shed no tear !  
The flower will bloom another year.  
Adieu, Adieu—I fly, adieu,  
I vanish in the heaven's blue—  
Adieu, Adieu !

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

### A BALLAD.

#### I.

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering?  
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

#### II.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

#### III.

I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever dew,  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.

## IV.

I met a lady in the meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery's child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

## V.

I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone ;  
She look'd at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan.

## VI.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery song.

## VII.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild, and manna dew,  
And sure in language strange she said—  
“I love thee true.”

## VIII.

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore  
And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
With kisses four.

## IX.

And there she lulled me asleep,  
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!  
The latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hill's side.

## X.

I saw pale kings and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;  
They cried—"La Belle Dame sans Merci  
Hath thee in thrall!"

## XI.

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke and found me here,  
On the cold hill's side.

## XII.

And this is why I sojourn here,  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

## THE EVE OF ST. MARK.

(UNFINISHED.)

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell ;  
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,  
That call'd the folk to evening prayer ;  
The city streets were clean and fair  
From wholesome drench of April rains  
And, on the western window panes,  
The chilly sunset faintly told  
Of unmatured green, valleys cold,  
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,  
Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,  
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,  
And daisies on the aguish hills.

Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell :  
The silent streets were crowded well  
With staid and pious companies,  
Warm from their fireside orat'ries ;  
And moving, with demurest air,  
To even-song, and vesper prayer.

Each arched porch, and entry low,  
Was fill'd with patient folk and slow,  
With whispers push, and shuffling feet,  
While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceased, the prayers begun,  
And Bertha had not yet half done  
A curious volume, patch'd and torn,  
That all day long, from earliest morn,  
Had taken captive her two eyes,  
Among its golden broderies ;  
Perplex'd her with a thousand things,—  
The stars of Heaven, and angels' wings,  
Martyrs in a fiery blaze,  
Azure saints and silver rays,  
Moses' breastplate, and the seven  
Candlesticks John saw in Heaven,  
The winged Lion of Saint Mark,  
And the Covenantal Ark,  
With its many mysteries,  
Cherubim and golden mice.

Bertha was a maiden fair,  
Dwelling in th' old Minster-square ;  
From her fireside she could see,  
Sidelong, its rich antiquity,  
Far as the Bishop's garden-wall ;  
Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,  
Full-leaved, the forest had outstript,  
By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,



So shelter'd by the mighty pile,  
Bertha arose, and read awhile,  
With forehead 'gainst the window-pane.  
Again she tried, and then again,  
Until the dusk eve left her dark  
Upon the legend of St. Mark.  
From plaited lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
She lifted up her soft warm chin,  
With aching neck and swimming eyes  
And dazed with saintly imag'ries.

All was gloom, and silent all,  
Save now and then the still foot-fall  
Of one returning homewards late,  
Past the echoing minster-gate.  
The clamorous daws, that all the day  
Above tree-tops and towers play,  
Pair by pair had gone to rest,  
Each in its ancient belfry-nest,  
Where asleep they fall betimes,  
To music and the drowsy chimes.

All was silent, all was gloom,  
Abroad and in the homely room :  
Down she sat, poor cheated soul !  
And struck a lamp from the dismal coal :  
Leaned forward, with bright drooping hair  
And slant book, full against the glare.  
Her shadow, in uneasy guise,  
Hover'd about, a giant size,

On ceiling-beam and old oak chair,  
The parrot's cage, and panel square ;  
And the warm angled winter-screen,  
On which were many monsters seen,  
Call'd doves of Siam, Lima mice,  
And legless birds of Paradise,  
Macaw, and tender Av'davat,  
And silken-furr'd Angora cat,  
Untired she read, her shadow still  
Glower'd about, as it would fill  
The room with wildest forms and shades,  
As though some ghostly queen of spades  
Had come to mock behind her back,  
And dance, and ruffle her garments black.  
Untired she read the legend page,  
Of holy Mark, from youth to age,  
On land, on sea, in pagan chains,  
Rejoicing for his many pains.  
Sometimes the learned eremite,  
With golden star, or dagger bright,  
Referr'd to pious poesies  
Written in smallest crow-quill size  
Beneath the text ; and thus the rhyme  
Was parcell'd out from time to time :  
——“ Als writith he of swevenis,  
Men han beforne they wake in bliss,  
Whanne that hir friendes thinke him bound  
In crimped shroude farre under grounde ;  
And how a litling child mote be  
A saint er its nativité,

Gif that the modre (God her blesse !)  
Kepen in solitarinesse,  
And kissen devoute the holy croce,  
Of Goddes love, and Sathan's force,—  
He writith ; and thinges many mo  
Of swiche thinges I may not shew.  
Bot I must tellen verilie  
Somdel of Saintè Cicilie,  
And chieflie what he auctorethe  
Of Saintè Markis life and dethe : ”

At length her constant eyelids come  
Upon the fervent martyrdom ;  
Then lastly to his holy shrine,  
Exalt amid the tapers' shine  
At Venice,—

## TO FANNY.

PHYSICIAN Nature ! let my spirit bleed !  
O ease my heart of verse and let me rest ;  
Throw me upon thy Tripod, till the flood  
Of stifling numbers ebbs from my full breast.  
A theme ! a theme ! Great Nature ! give a theme ;  
    Let me begin my dream.  
I come — I see thee, as thou standest there ;  
Beckon me not into the wintry air.

Ah ! dearest love, sweet home of all my fears,  
And hopes, and joys, and panting miseries, —  
To-night, if I may guess, thy beauty wears  
    A smile of such delight,  
    As brilliant and as bright,  
As when with ravished, aching, vassal eyes,  
    Lost in soft amaze,  
    I gaze, I gaze !

Who now, with greedy looks, eats up my feast ?  
What stare outfaces now my silver moon !  
Ah ! keep that hand unravished at the least ;  
    Let, let the amorous burn —  
    But, pr'ythee, do not turn  
The current of your heart from me so soon.

O ! save, in charity,  
The quickest pulse for me.

Save it for me, sweet love ! though music breathe  
Voluptuous visions into the warm air,  
Though swimming through the dance's dangerous  
wreath ;

Be like an April day,  
Smiling and cold and gay,  
A temperate lily. temperate as fair ;  
Then, Heaven ! there will be  
A warmer June for me.

Why, this — you 'll say, my Fanny ! is not true :  
Put your soft hand upon your snowy side,  
Where the heart beats : confess — 't is nothing  
new —

Must not a woman be  
A feather on the sea,  
Sway'd to and fro by every wind and tide ?  
Of as uncertain speed  
As blow-ball from the mead ?

I know it — and to know it is despair  
To one who loves you as I love, sweet Fanny !  
Whose heart goes flutt'ring for you every where,  
Nor, when away you roam,  
Dare keep its wretched home,  
Love, love alone, his pains severe and many :

Then, loveliest ! keep me free,  
From torturing jealousy.

Ah ! if you prize my subdued soul above  
The poor, the fading, brief, pride of an hour ;

Let none profane my Holy See of love,

Or with a rude hand break

The sacramental cake :

Let none else touch the just new-budded flower ;

If not — may my eyes close,

Love ! on their lost repose

## SONNETS.

## I.

OH! how I love, on a fair summer's eve,  
When streams of light pour down the golden  
west,  
And on the balmy zephyrs tranquil rest  
The silver clouds, — far, far away to leave  
All meaner thoughts, and take a sweet reprieve  
From little cares ; to find, with easy quest,  
A fragrant wild, with Nature's beauty drest,  
And there into delight my soul deceive.  
There warm my breast with patriotic lore,  
Musing on Milton's fate — on Sydney's bier —  
Till their stern forms before my mind arise .  
Perhaps on wing of Poesy upsoar,  
Full often dropping a delicious tear,  
When some melodious sorrow spells mine eyes.

## II.

TO A YOUNG LADY WHO SENT ME A LAUREL  
CROWN.

FRESH morning gusts have blown away all fear  
From my glad bosom — now from gloominess  
I mount forever — not an atom less  
Than the proud laurel shall content my bier.  
No! by the eternal stars! or why sit here  
In the Sun's eye, and 'gainst my temples press  
Apollo's very leaves, woven to bless  
By thy white fingers and thy spirit clear.  
Lo! who dares say, "Do this?" Who dares call  
down  
My will from its high purpose? Who say,  
"Stand,"  
Or "Go?" This mighty moment I would frown  
On abject Caesars — not the stoutest band  
Of mailed heroes should tear off my crown:  
Yet would I kneel and kiss thy gentle hand!



## III.

AFTER dark vapors have oppress'd our plains  
 For a long dreary season, comes a day  
 Born of the gentle south, and clears away  
 From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.  
 The anxious mouth, relieved from its pains,  
 Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May,  
 The eyelids with the passing coolness play,  
 Like rose leaves with the drip of summer rains.  
 And calmest thoughts come round us — as, of  
     leaves  
 Budding, — fruit ripening in stillness, — au-  
     tumn suns  
 Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves, —  
 Sweet Sappho's cheek, — a sleeping infant's  
     breath, —  
 The gradual sand that through an hour-glass  
     runs, —  
 A woodland rivulet, — a Poet's death.

Jan. 1817

passing by  
 time to, valley  
 it is a good thing  
 to feel  
 the

## IV.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK SPACE OF A LEAF  
AT THE END OF CHAUCER'S TALE OF "THE  
FLOWRE AND THE LEFE."

This pleasant tale is like a little copse :  
The honeyed lines so freshly interlace,  
To keep the reader in so sweet a place,  
So that he here and there full-hearted stops ;  
And oftentimes he feels the dewy drops  
Come cool and suddenly against his face,  
And, by the wandering melody, may trace  
Which way the tender-legged linnet hops.  
Oh ! what a power has white simplicity !  
What mighty power has this gentle story !  
I, that do ever feel athirst for glory,  
Could at this moment be content to lie  
Meekly upon the grass, as those whose sobbings  
Were heard of none beside the mournful robins.

Feb. 1847.

## V.

## ON THE SEA.

It keeps eternal whisperings around  
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell  
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell  
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.  
Often 't is in such gentle temper found,  
That scarcely will the very smallest shell  
Be moved for days from where it sometime fell,  
When last the winds of heaven were unbound.  
O ye! who have your eyeballs vexed and tired,  
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;  
O ye! whose ears are dinn'd with uproar rude,  
Or fed too much with cloying melody, —  
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood  
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quired!

Aug. 1817.

## VI.

ON LEIGH HUNT'S POEM, THE "STORY OF  
RIMINI."

Who loves to peer up at the morning sun,  
With half-shut eyes and comfortable cheek,  
Let him, with this sweet tale, full often seek  
For meadows where the little rivers run ;  
Who loves to linger with that brightest one  
Of Heaven — Hesperus — let him lowly speak  
These numbers to the night, and starlight meek,  
Or moon, if that her hunting be begun.  
He who knows these delights, and too is prone  
To moralize upon a smile or tear,  
Will find at once a region of his own,  
A bower for his spirit, and will steer  
To alleys, where the fir-tree drops its cone,  
Where robins hop, and fallen leaves are sear.

1817.

## VII.

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
 Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,  
 Before high-piled books, in charact'ry,  
 Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd grain ;  
 When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,  
 Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
 And think that I may never live to trace  
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance  
 And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!  
 That I shall never look upon thee more,  
 Never have relish in the faery power  
 Of unreflecting love! — then on the shore  
 Of the wide world I stand alone, and think  
 Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

1817

Love & Fame  
 are nothing at all  
 I see him as if  
 that is when is the  
 important one

## VIII.

## TO HOMER.

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,  
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,  
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance  
To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.  
So thou wast blind ! — but then the veil was rent,  
For Jove uncurtain'd Heaven to let thee live,  
And Neptune made for thee a spermy tent,  
And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive ;  
Aye, on the shores of darkness there is light,  
And precipices show untrodden green ;  
There is a budding morrow in midnight ;  
There is a triple sight in blindness keen :  
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befell  
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.



## ANSWER TO A SONNET ENDING THUS : —

“Dark eyes are dearer far  
Than those that made the hyacinthine bell.”

By J. H. REYNOLDS.

BLUE ! 'T is the life of heaven, — the domain  
Of Cynthia, — the wide palace of the sun, —  
The tent of Hesperus, and all his train, —  
The bosomer of clouds, gold, gray, and dun.  
Blue ! 'T is the life of waters — ocean  
And all its vassal streams : pools numberless  
May rage, and foam, and fret, but never can  
Subside, if not to dark-blue nativeness.  
Blue ! Gentle cousin of the forest-green,  
Married to green in all the sweetest flowers —  
Forget-me-not, — the blue bell, — and, that queen  
Of secrecy, the violet : what strange powers  
Hast thou, as a mere shadow ! But how great,  
When in an Eye thou art alive with fate !

Feb. 1818



## TO J. H. REYNOLDS.

O THAT a week could be an age, and we  
Felt parting and warm meeting every week ;  
Then one poor year a thousand years would be,  
The flush of welcome ever on the cheek :  
So could we live long life in little space,  
So time itself would be annihilate,  
So a day's journey in oblivious haze  
To serve our joys would lengthen and dilate.  
O to arrive each Monday morn from Ind !  
To land each Tuesday from the rich Levant !  
In little time a host of joys to bind,  
And keep our souls in one eternal pant !  
This morn, my friend, and yester-evening taught  
Me how to harbor such a happy thought.



## XI.

TO ———.\*

TIME's sea hath been five years at its slow ebb,  
Long hours have to and fro let creep the sand,  
Since I was tangled in thy beauty's web,  
And snared by the ungloving of thine hand.  
And yet I never look on midnight sky,  
But I behold thine eyes' well-remembered light ;  
I cannot look upon the rose's dye,  
But to thy cheek my soul doth take its flight ;  
I cannot look on any budding flower,  
But my fond ear, in fancy at thy lips,  
And hearkening for a love-sound, doth devour  
Its sweets in the wrong sense :— Thou dost  
eclipse  
Every delight with sweet remembering,  
And grief unto my darling joys dost bring.

\* A lady whom he saw for some moments at Vauxhall

## XII.

## TO SLEEP.

O soft embalmer of the still midnight!  
 Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,  
 Our gloom-pleased eyes, embower'd from the light,  
 Eas'd in forgetfulness divine;  
 O soothing Sleep! if so it please thee, close,  
 In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,  
 Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
 Around my bed its lulling charities;  
 Then save me, or the passed day will shine  
 Upon my pillow, breeding many woes;  
 Save me from curious conscience, that still lords  
 Its strength, for darkness burrowing like a mole;  
 Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,  
 And seal the hushed casket of my soul.

1818.

✓  
 a soul from  
 suffering, free  
 from all  
 pain & sorrow

## XIII.

## ON FAME.

FAME, like a wayward girl, will still be coy  
To those who woo her with too slavish knees,  
But makes surrender to some thoughtless boy,  
And dotes the more upon a heart at ease.  
She is a Gipsey, — will not speak to those  
Who have not learnt to be content without her;  
A Jilt, whose ear was never whisper'd close,  
Who thinks they scandal her who talk about  
her;  
A very Gipsey is she, Nilus-born,  
Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;  
Ye lovesick Bards! repay her scorn for scorn;  
Ye Artists lovelorn! madmen that ye are!  
Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,  
Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

1819.

## XIV.

## ON FAME.

"You cannot eat your cake and have it too." — *Proverb*

How fever'd is the man, who cannot look  
Upon his mortal days with temperate blood,  
Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,  
And robs his fair name of its maidenhood:

It is as if the rose should pluck herself,  
Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom ;  
As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,  
Should darken her pure grot with muddy  
gloom.

But the rose leaves herself upon the brier,  
For winds to kiss and grateful bees to feed,  
And the ripe plum still wears its dim attire,  
The undisturbed lake has crystal space :  
Why then should man, teasing the world for  
grace,  
Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed ?

1819.

## XV.

WHY did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell;  
 No God, no Demon of severe response,  
 Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell:  
 Then to my human heart I turn at once. —  
 Heart! Thou and I are here sad and alone;  
 I say, why did I laugh? O mortal pain!  
 O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I moan,  
 To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in  
 vain.

Why did I laugh? I know this Being's lease,  
 My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;  
 Yet would I on this very midnight cease,  
 And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds;  
 Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,  
 But Death intenser — Death is Life's high meed.

1819.

## XVI.

## ON A DREAM.

As Hermes once took to his feathers light,  
When lulled Argus, baffled, swoon'd and slept,  
So on a Delphic reed, my idle spright,  
So play'd, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so bereft  
The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes,  
And seeing it asleep, so fled away,  
Not to pure Ida with its snow-cold skies,  
Nor unto Tempe, where Jove grieved a day,  
But to that second circle of sad Hell,  
Where in the gust, the whirlwind, and the flaw  
Of rain and hailstones, lovers need not tell  
Their sorrows:—pale were the sweet lips I  
saw;  
Pale were the lips I kiss'd, and fair the form  
I floated with, about that melancholy storm.

## XVII.

If by dull rhymes our English must be chain'd,  
And, like Andromeda, the Sonnet sweet  
Fetter'd, in spite of pained loveliness,  
Let us find out, if we must be constrain'd,  
Sandals more interwoven and complete  
To fit the naked foot of poesy ;  
Let us inspect the lyre, and weigh the stress  
Of every chord, and see what may be gain'd  
By ear industrious, and attention meet ;  
Misers of sound and syllable, no less  
Than Midas of his coinage, let us be  
Jealous of dead leaves in the bay-wreath crown :  
So, if we may not let the Muse be free,  
She will be bound with garlands of her own.

## XVIII.

THE day is gone, and all its sweets are gone !  
Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer  
    breast,  
Warm breath, light whisper, tender semitone,  
Bright eyes, accomplish'd shape, and lang'rous  
    waist !  
Faded the flower and all its budded charms,  
Faded the sight of beauty from my eyes,  
Faded the shape of beauty from my arms,  
Faded the voice, warmth, whiteness, paradise !  
Vanish'd unseasonably at shut of eve,  
When the dusk holiday — or holinight —  
Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave  
The woof of darkness thick, for hid delight :  
But, as I've read love's missal through to-day,  
He'll let me sleep, seeing I fast and pray.



## XIX.

I CRY your mercy — pity — love — ay, love!

Merciful love that tantalizes not,

One-thoughted, never-wandering, guileless love,

Unmask'd, and being seen — without a blot!

O! let me have thee whole, — all — all — be mine!

That shape, that fairness, that sweet minor zest  
Of love, your kiss, — those hands, those eyes  
divine,

That warm, white, lucent, million-pleasured  
breast, —

Yourself — your soul — in pity give me all,

Withhold no atom's atom, or I die,

Or living on perhaps, your wretched thrall,

Forget, in the mist of idle misery,

Life's purposes — the palate of my mind

Losing its gust, and my ambition blind!

## II

## KEATS'S LAST SONNET.

BRIGHT star, would I were steadfast as thou art!  
 Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,  
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
 Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,  
 The moving waters at their priestlike task  
 Of pure ablution round earth's human shores  
 Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
 Of snow upon the mountains and the moors:  
 No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,  
 Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
 To feel forever its soft fall and swell,  
 Awake forever in a sweet unrest,  
 Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
 And so live ever — or else swoon to death.\*

\* Another reading: —

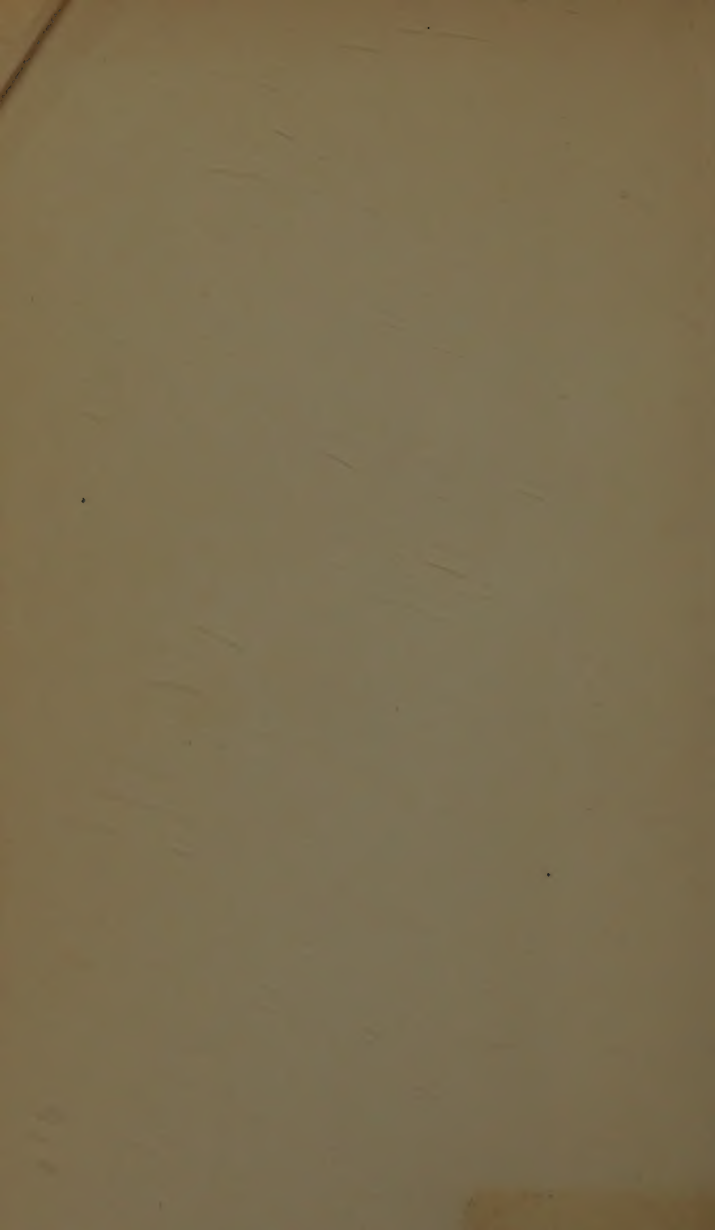
Half-passionless, and so swoon on to death.

THE END.













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